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OUTDOOR PORTRAITS



APOY H₂O WINNERS
STUNNING PICTURES

amateur

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Saturday 25 July 2009

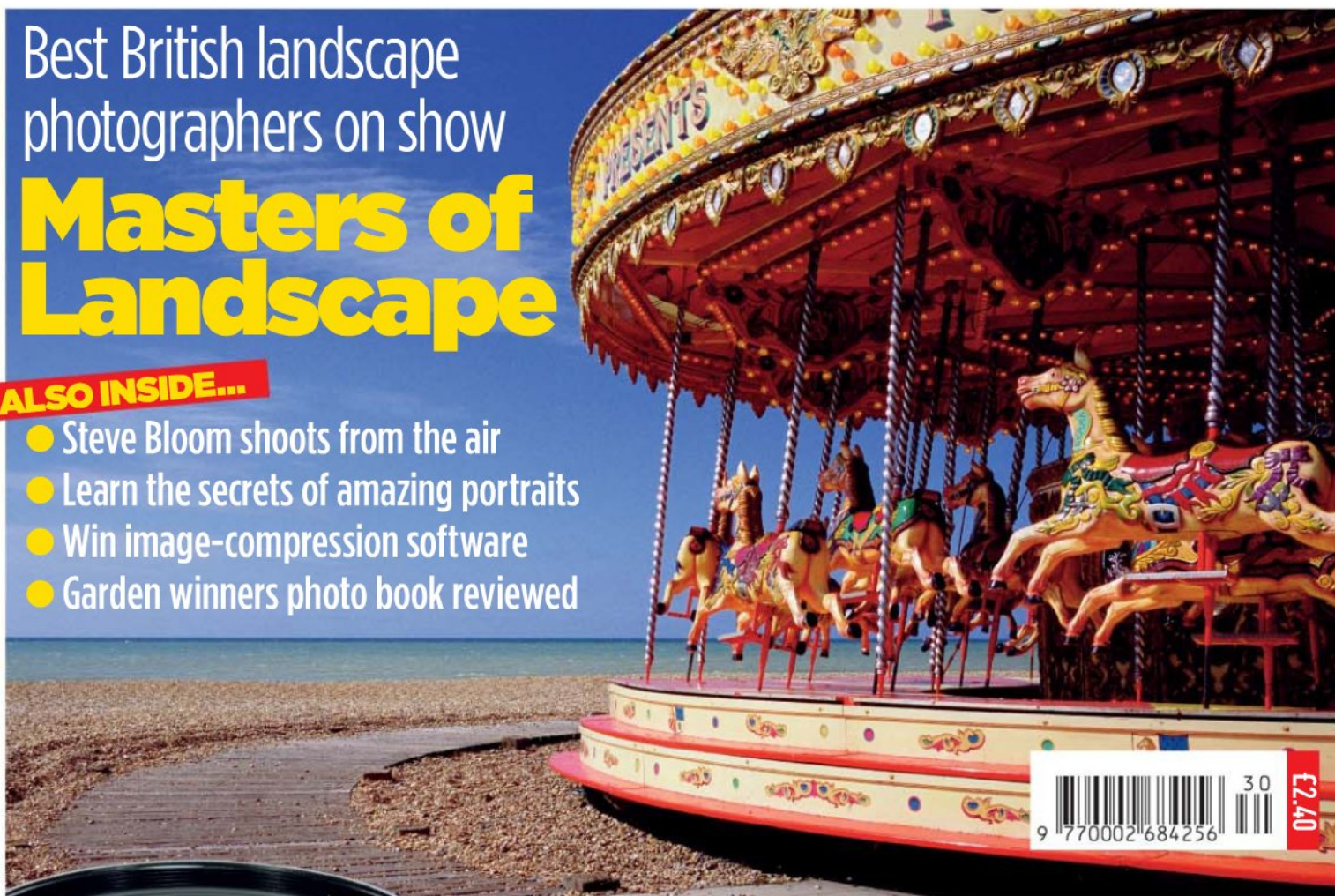
Photographer

Best British landscape
photographers on show

Masters of Landscape

ALSO INSIDE...

- Steve Bloom shoots from the air
- Learn the secrets of amazing portraits
- Win image-compression software
- Garden winners photo book reviewed



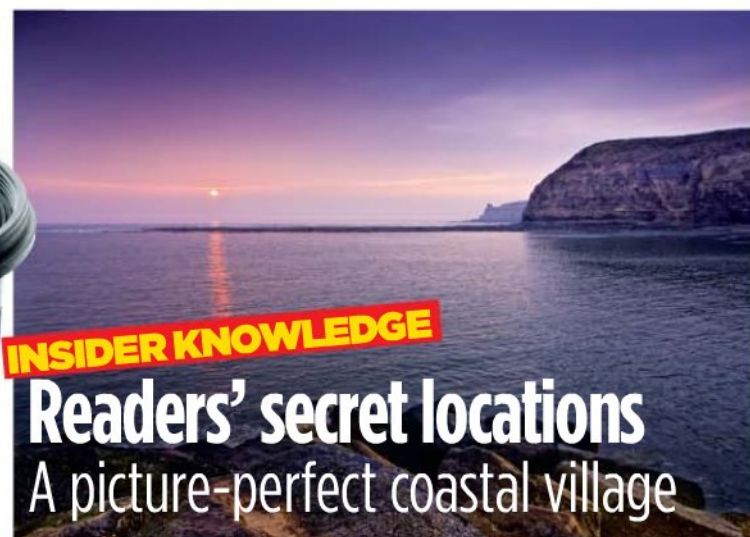
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Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

Making the world go round



Damien Demolder
Editor

The stimulus to take pictures is something that has always fascinated me. The question 'Why do we do it?' is reasonably

easy to answer. It can provoke a wide range of responses reflecting the habit-forming and addictive qualities of the photographic occupation, as well as the logic-based requirement to record events, objects and people. The question 'Why did I just take that picture?', however, can be one that it is more comfortable to avoid, unless you're happy to be faced with your propensity for occasional, aimless action.

Looking at the situation from the other angle, we could ask, 'How do we choose what to shoot?' If you are a professional on a commission you shoot what you are required to shoot. As an amateur, however, armed with freewill and infinite possibilities, it is sometimes so difficult to pick from that endless array of subjects that we become artistically paralysed. There is so much choice we can't begin.

If you have a disposition that is able to generate projects, ideas and self-motivation, you are extremely lucky. If you don't, you'll need some inspiration. This month's APOY winners (p34) clearly demonstrate what can be done when shooting to a set theme with clear goals. For me, themes, goals and targets really do make the world go round.

Our question of the week



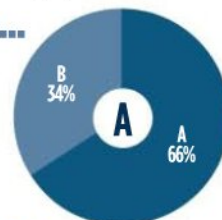
In AP 11 July we asked...

Do you feel confident enough to be the 'unofficial' wedding photographer?

You answered...

A Yes 66%

B No 34%



This week we ask...

Do you often need a bit of external stimulus to get your photography going?

A Yes **B** No

Vote online
www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

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We reveal the top 30 winners from the H₂O round of Amateur Photographer of the Year

Send us your pictures

To have your pictures published in Gallery, send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. Visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/apgallery for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.

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20 Winters' subtle approach

COVER STORY

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26 Masters of Vision

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David Clark tells the story behind Philippe Halsman's surrealist tour de force, Dali Atomicus, a technical and creative triumph produced in collaboration with artist Salvador Dali

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News

News | Analysis | Comment | PhotoDiary 25/7/09

“A small step for a man was a huge leap for photography”

Says Hasselblad on this week's 40th anniversary of the moon landing, page 7



Handcuffed and locked in police van | Amateur left 'traumatised'

Amateur arrested in police photo row

AP RIGHTS WATCH
Committed to defending your photographic rights!

AN amateur photographer was arrested under anti-terrorism laws on a Kent high street after taking a picture of a police officer.

Alex Turner has complained to the Professional Standards Department of Kent Police after he was arrested on 8 July.

As we went to press, the Independent Police Complaints Commission was examining the complaint after police chiefs passed it on to the police watchdog.

Writing on his blog, Turner said he was initially stopped by two men who claimed to work for 'Medway Council', as he took pictures near Snappy Snaps.

He said he declined to provide details of his identity when requested because the men did not identify themselves as police officers.



Alex Turner, who has complained to Kent Police, said he was arrested after taking a picture of police officers. He removed their faces from the image he supplied to AP

And because he was using an Olympus OM1 film camera he was unable to show them a preview of the pictures he had taken.

They then called on a nearby Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and were later joined by another officer.

'As I was arrested I was handcuffed. I asked why she had arrested me. She said because I had taken a photograph of her and that

she considered this to be an unlawful obstruction.

'After a short time I was led up the high street and detained in a police van for around 20 minutes.'

Turner said that officers then spoke to him about the threat of terrorism and the 'suspicious nature of people with cameras'.

The photographer said he was later 'de-arrested' after police officers conducted a search and checked his

identity through the driving licence he was carrying.

A spokesman for Kent Police later confirmed: 'After a short period of time the man was de-arrested and no further action will be taken.'

Turner said the officer told him he was being arrested under 'Section 44' of the Terrorism Act.

However, police refused to confirm to AP which section of the Terrorism Act was used.

But Turner said the incident has left him 'upset, embarrassed and traumatised'.

'I believe the way I was treated was unjustified and wholly disproportionate,' Turner added.

'I assert that Officer xxxx misused her powers of arrest and demonstrated a poor understanding of the law in relation to arrest, the use of force, the use of detention, photography in public places, obstruction and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2000.'

● Police under fire, page 6

SNAP SHOT

Cartier-Bressons found

Hundreds of photos that Henri Cartier-Bresson had ordered be destroyed after damage caused by a flood in the 1990s, have turned up on the black market. Cartier-Bresson's wife, the Magnum photographer Martine Franck, has accused the French government of negligence over the matter by failing to look after the prints and not destroying them. It is thought that someone may have retrieved the prints from a bin at the country's National Centre for Contemporary Arts. Cartier-Bresson, credited as one of the founding fathers of modern photojournalism, died in 2004 aged 95.

Micro Four Thirds adapters

Adapters that allow Pentax K and Nikon F-mount Voigtlander and Carl Zeiss lenses to be connected to Micro Four Thirds camera bodies have been announced by Cosina Japan. As there is no electrical connection, they will only be compatible with lenses featuring a manual aperture ring. UK availability has yet to be announced.

Nikon: No show

Nikon will not stage its annual Nikon Solutions Expo this year. The event, which takes place at Olympia in London, is aimed at amateurs and professionals. A Nikon UK spokeswoman said: 'We are reviewing all our events and sponsorships and are investigating possible opportunities for the future.'



Leica tight-lipped over S2 launch date

advert published in Norwegian photography magazine *Fotografi*.

Asked whether there has been a delay to the launch, a Leica UK spokeswoman said: 'At the moment we don't have any confirmed delivery times and haven't issued any dates or prices in the UK as yet.'

She added that Leica has nothing to add to information it released at last year's

unveiling of the camera at photokina in Germany.

The firm then stated the S2 would go on sale in summer 2009.

Leica ranks the historic significance of the 'larger than system on a par with the legendary Leica 1, launched 84 years ago.

The 37.5-million-pixel product, the first camera in

the new 'S-system', is being promoted as a professional digital SLR that Leica predicts will fill a gap in the market.

The firm claims that the S2 will combine the benefits of a medium-format camera, with the handling of a digital SLR, while retaining the 'look and feel' of a Leica.

The 'flagship' model will feature a 30x45mm, Kodak-made CCD imaging sensor.

LEICA UK has indicated that its long-awaited S2 camera (pictured) is still on course for launch this summer despite a dealer's claim that it will not arrive until 'September'.

The September delivery date appears in a full-page

PhotoDiary

A week of photographic opportunity

WEDNESDAY

22 JULY

DON'T MISS Advanced Digital Photography Course at The Courts Garden, Holt, Wiltshire BA14 6RR. Tel: 01225 782 875. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** GM Trevelyan in Photographs at Wallington Cambo, Northumberland NE61 4AR. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

THURSDAY

23 JULY

EXHIBITION East End Eye, 1960s photos by Steve Lewis, until 29 August at Red House Museum and Gardens, Dorset BH23 1BU. Tel: 01202 482 860.

EXHIBITION Bill Nicholson Photography Exhibition at Ilam park, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2AZ. Tel: 01335 350 503. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.



© STEVE LEWIS

FRIDAY

24 JULY

EXHIBITION Collective Works by Mary McCartney, until 26 July at Nunnington Hall, North Yorkshire YO62 5UY. Tel: 01439 748 283. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Hungry, featuring 'best emerging photographers', until 29 August at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Wolverhampton WV1 1DU. Tel: 01902 552 055. Visit www.wolverhamptonart.org.uk.

SATURDAY

25 JULY

DON'T MISS Welsh National Horse Carriage Trails (9am-5pm) at Erddig, Wales LL13 0YT. Tel: 01978 315 151. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **DON'T MISS** Stonehenge Landscape Guided Walk (10.30am-noon), Wiltshire. Meet at Stonehenge car park. Tel: 01980 664 780. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk.

SUNDAY

26 JULY

EXHIBITION Les Rencontres d'Arles photography festival, exhibitions in Arles, France, until 13 September. **EXHIBITION** Three Scottish Photographers, until 26 July at Gladstone Gallery, Edinburgh. Tel: 07740 500 985.

MONDAY

27 JULY

EXHIBITION When You're a Boy, until 4 October at The Photographers' Gallery, London W1F 7LW. Tel: 0845 262 1618. Visit www.photonet.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Music and Fashion, until 31 August at National Conservation Centre, Liverpool L1 6HZ. Visit www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk.

TUESDAY

28 JULY

EXHIBITION Homeland by Nina Berman, until 29 August at Side Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3JE. Tel: 01912 322 208. Visit www.amber-online.com. **EXHIBITION** Gay Icons, until 18 October at National Portrait Gallery, London WC2H 0HE. Tel: 0207 312 2452. Visit www.npg.org.uk.



News

Met under fire over photo 'advice'

AP RIGHTS WATCH

Committed to defending your photographic rights!

PHOTOGRAPHERS may be stopped and quizzed by police if they are seen taking pictures of officers, warns new guidance published by London's Metropolitan Police. Aimed at photographers and officers, the Met issued the advice on its website in response to 'regular debate' about photography in public.

It states: 'It should ordinarily be considered inappropriate to use Section 58a [Section 76 of the Terrorism Act 2008] to arrest people photographing police officers in the course of normal policing activities, including protests, as without more, there is no link to terrorism.'

But it adds: 'There is, however, nothing preventing officers asking questions of an individual who appears to be taking photographs of someone who is or has been a member of Her Majesty's Forces, Intelligence Services or a constable.'

The Met says any officer 'making an arrest' under Section 58a must be able to demonstrate 'a reasonable suspicion that the information was of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism'.

Meanwhile, anti-terror police have the legal right to view a photographer's digital images [under Section 44 of

the Terrorism Act 2000] but they have no power to delete or destroy them without a court order, says lawyer Rupert Grey.

Confusion

Grey had sought to dispel potential confusion surrounding the Met's advice and subsequent reaction by the National Union of Journalists.

The Met's guidance states that officers have the right to seize and retain any article found during a search that they reasonably suspect is intended to be used in connection with terrorism.

Grey, a media lawyer at Swan Turton, said: 'This is correct as far as the powers conferred by Section 44 are concerned. But the Advice fails to point out that although film and memory cards may be seized as part of a search, officers do not have a legal power to delete images or to destroy film.'

He added: 'The Association of Chief Police Officers' *Practice Advice on Stop and Search in Relation to Terrorism* makes this clear. So do *Guidelines for MPS staff on dealing with media reporters, press photographers and television crews*: "Once images are recorded, [the police] have no power to delete or confiscate them without a court order."

'Further, the *Practice Advice* points out that although under Section 44 an officer is entitled to look at images on your data card, they should

not normally attempt to do so.'

Section 44 of the Terrorism Act gives police the power to stop and search people whether or not there are grounds to suspect a connection with terrorism. The Met states that officers are allowed to view images provided this is to determine whether the images could be used in connection with terrorism.

Authorisation given to officers to use Section 44 must be confined to a specific geographical area and length of time.

Criticism mounts

Responding to the Met's photo advice, the NUJ tells its members: 'Whilst recognising the rights of photographers to take photos in public places, the guidance goes on to inaccurately say that, under Section 43 of the Terrorism Act 2000, police can demand to see the images that have been taken. Under the section such a demand can only be made where the person is suspected of actually being a terrorist.'

Critics also include press photographer Mark Vallée, who said photographers will remain 'deeply concerned' about the use of the terror law to stop legitimate photographs of police officers at public protests.

The Met had yet to respond to our request for comment at the time of writing.

● To see the Met's advice visit <http://www.met.police.uk/about/photography.htm>.

Home Office: 'Nothing to do with us'

The Home Office has distanced itself from the Met's guidance. Asked whether it had been endorsed by the Home Office, a spokesman told 'Amateur Photographer' (AP): 'The Home Office has got nothing to do with it.'

He added: 'As the Home Secretary recently made clear in his response to Lord Carlile's report into counter-terrorism laws, they were not designed nor intended to stop people taking photographs and the Home Office is working towards providing further clarification both for the public and those involved in its enforcement.'

The spokesman confirmed that Home Office Minister David Hanson still plans to issue a separate circular to police regarding the controversial law. He said the police circular will be issued in 'the near future' and that there are 'still ongoing discussions with police' about it.

In March, the Home Office told AP that a draft copy of the circular will be sent to the magazine prior to its distribution to police forces nationwide. This followed a meeting between AP staff and the then counter-terrorism minister Vernon Coaker.



Do you have a story?
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UK photographer lands best picture crown

THE traditional still image makes a bigger impression on the viewer than rolling TV news and the internet, claim organisers of The Press Photographer's Year 2009.

A spokesman for the contest, now in its fourth year, said: 'The competition's aim is to demonstrate once again that even in an age of rolling television news, internet and satellite communication, the traditional still image makes the keenest, fastest impression on the public consciousness and is the most effective way to show the world as it really is.'

A photo of an orphaned elephant by UK-based freelance photographer Rosie Hallam beat nearly 8,000 other images to claim the



© ROSIE HALLAM

Photograph of the Year title. Captured at the David Sheldrick Elephant Orphanage in Kenya, the picture was published as part of a feature in the *Daily Mail*.

Speaking to AP after receiving the honour, Hallam said she shot the image early one morning in January using

a Canon EOS 5D digital SLR and 50mm f/1.4 lens.

Around 150 of the best entries have gone on show until 1 August in a free exhibition at the National Theatre on London's South Bank.

More than 300 photographers took part.

ClubNews

AP's weekly round-up of club news from all over Britain

Hebden Bridge Camera Club

Images by Martin Parr, a former club member, are included in the club's free-to-enter photography exhibition, which takes place from 15-23 August at the Arts Festival Shop, New Oxford House, Albert Street, Hebden Bridge, West Yorks. Tel: 01422 885 244. Visit www.hebdenbridgecc.co.uk.

Exmouth Photo Group

Exhibition and sale of work by members takes place at A La Ronde, Summer Lane, Exmouth, Devon EX8 5BD. Tel: 01395 265 514. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. Club details area available at www.exmouthphotogroup.com.

Bebington Photographic Society

The club's annual print exhibition takes place at the Lyceum, Park Road, Port Sunlight Village, Wirral, Merseyside, from 25 July-31 August. It is open 10.30am-4.30pm and entry is free. Visit www.bebingtonps.org.uk.

Send club news to: apevents@ipcmedia.com



Kodachrome contact

Kodak has issued a UK/European contact number for photographers with queries relating to the processing of Kodachrome film, which has ceased production. The number to call is 0870 850 0020. A few weeks ago Kodak pledged to process orders from the UK until 30 November 2010 (see 'News', AP 11 July). The process-paid film is sent by Kodak Europe to a lab in Kansas, United States, the only place now processing the emulsion.

Frame filler

Sales of digital photo frames fell in May, but there were still enough to create four iMax-sized movie screens if joined together, according to GfK Retail and Technology. A GfK spokesman said: 'Nearly 72,000 digital photo frames were sold in May 2009, a decline of 1% in volume versus the same time last year. 65% of these were 7in frames.'

Hasselblad celebrates moon landing anniversary

A SMALL step for a man was a 'huge leap for photography' says Hasselblad, which is marking the 40th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing this month.

Hasselblad, whose cameras were used by astronauts, is celebrating the Apollo 11 anniversary by taking selected photographers on an expenses-paid trip to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Recalling the history of its cameras in space, Hasselblad said: 'In 1962, astronaut Walter Schirra took his Hasselblad on board the Mercury-Atlas 8 and took the first images of earth from space. Hasselblad followed NASA, on space flight after space flight, with Hasselblad cameras proving that they could meet the stringent demands made by extraterrestrial travel.'

'And in 1969, when the world watched in awe as the Apollo 11 astronauts became the first men to set foot on the moon, those astronauts also carried Hasselblad cameras, capturing some of



the most definitive images man has ever captured.'

Hasselblad CEO Christian Poulsen said lunar travel posed challenges such as extreme temperatures and dust... placing serious strains on equipment.

The firm added: 'The research and development that was required to meet the challenges of space travel benefitted not only extraterrestrial photographers, but even those with both feet firmly on the ground.'

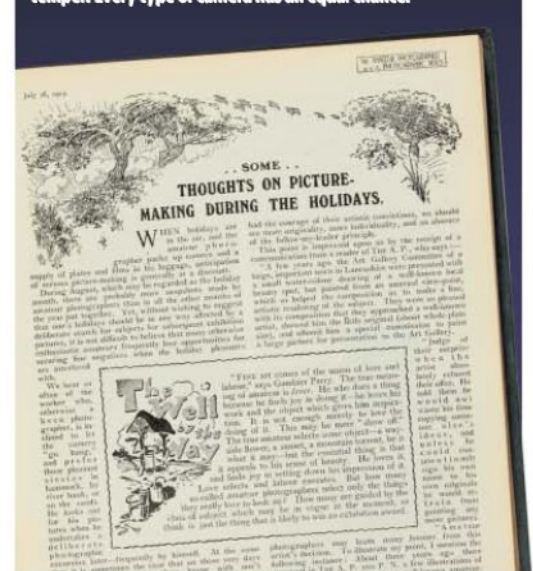
Hasselblad customers who buy an H3D11-50 or H3D11-60 camera until 21 August will be eligible to take part in the trip to Florida. It takes place from 24-26 September.

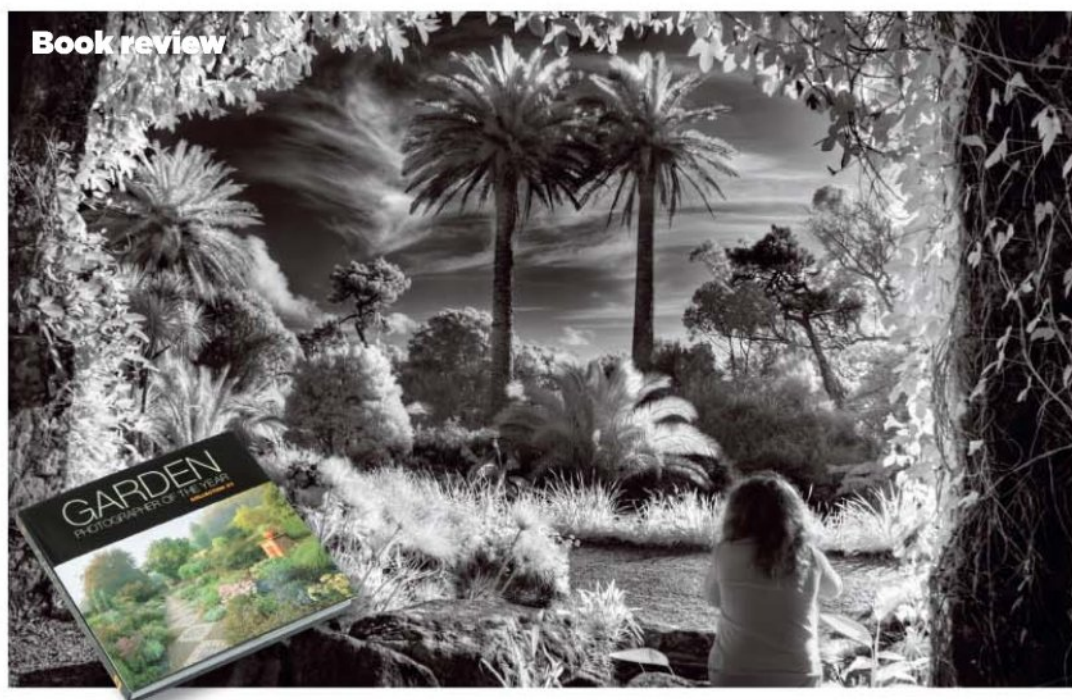
Amateur Photographer

This week in...

1913

As readers packed their bags for the summer holidays, AP pointed out that more photos are probably captured during August than any other month. The journal also called for 'more real holiday pictures and less casual snapshots', warning of being distracted from the task in hand when photography often 'interferes' with other 'holiday pleasures'. 'We hear so often of the worker who, otherwise a keen photographer, is inclined to let the camera "go hang" and prefers those pleasant siestas in hammock, by river bank, or on the sands. He looks out for his pictures, when he undertakes a deliberate photographic excursion later - frequently by himself.' The article added: 'All the requirements that photography demands are present during the holiday month - good light, good subjects and good temper. Every type of camera has an equal chance.'





International Garden Photographer of the Year

Collection 02

AA Publishing, hardback, 224 pages, £25, ISBN 978-0-7495-6182-6

With this year's International Garden Photographer of the Year competition complete, we are once again treated

to a stunning compendium of all the finalists. This, the second collection of the competition, brings together more than 200 images that are surprisingly diverse. Two of the most creative categories were the Edible Garden and People in the Garden, in which the photographers experimented with perspective and lighting to produce images that are anything but ordinary. Seeing these works reproduced large is a real treat.

Observant AP readers might also notice a few familiar names among the winners and finalists and profiles of last-year's victors. Former APOY winners Colin Roberts and Pete Bridgwood both feature, as do first-place winners Colin Varndell and Paul Debois. We doff our hats to them for what is a truly remarkable accomplishment.

Jeff Meyer



Website

www.cameraporn.net

No, this is not a dodgy 'adult' website. Cameraporn.net is the brainchild of America-based duo Ryan Goodman and Chris Lea, who by their own admission are completely obsessed with cameras. Recently relaunched with a new design, the half photo-blog, half online magazine contains a wealth of original content. It is also a portal to numerous photography resources from across the web. Original content includes camera reviews, interviews, incisive technique articles and diary-style location shoot write-ups. The '60 photography links you can't live without' page is a comprehensive guide to some of the best blogs, photographer portfolios and photography news sources online. It isn't exhaustive, but there is plenty to whet your appetite. In fact, there is so

much to read, mull over and debate, you may have to prise yourself from your keyboard with a crow bar. Aside from its huge range of content, the site's chief attraction is the opportunity it provides to interact with other photographers. Users are encouraged to share web-links, give feedback on each other's images and participate in online photo projects. Definitely not a website to keep to yourself.

Gemma Padley



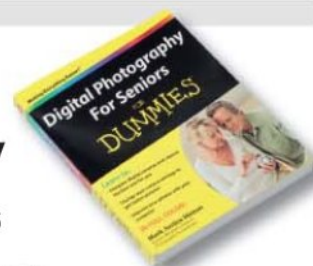
Book review

Digital Photography for Seniors for Dummies

By Mark Justice Hinton

Wiley Publishing, paperback,

340 pages, £16.99, ISBN 978-0-470-44417-7



Being that no one on AP is even as old as my Pentax SV, AP dropped this latest *For Dummies* book in the post and asked me to read it. So I did. And where to start.

I suppose the large print will be beneficial to some, but I found it quite the epitome for how patronising this book seems. I understand it is meant to be a primer, but do the editors really believe my brethren and I are so unintelligent we need to be told to remove the lens cap to be able to take a picture? Or that we need to click on a file to open it? What's more, the pictures used to illustrate the points are pedestrian at best and poor quality, with subjects ranging from fellow seniors to grandchildren.

It's not all useless. There's some discussion of scene modes and face detection and how to straighten photos, which I actually found quite useful. But, really, this is a book for any al-Qaeda operative who has been in a cave for the past decade and didn't know digital capture existed until they read this title.

Ogden Chesnutt



Exhibition

Polaroids: Mapplethorpe

Until 13 September. Lower and Upper Galleries, Modern Art Oxford, 30 Pembroke Street, Oxford OX1 1BP. Open Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun noon-5pm. Tel: 01865 813 830. Website: www.modernartoxford.org.uk. Admission free

Robert Mapplethorpe was an enigma. On one hand he produced beautiful pictures of orchids and lilies and portraits of the artists and celebrities he counted among his friends. On the other, he produced explicit, sexually charged images that – ahem – whipped the Christian right into a frenzy. Twenty years since his death, he remains enigmatic.

It all began in New York's famous Chelsea Hotel, where filmmaker Sandy Daley gave Mapplethorpe her Polaroid camera, marking the beginning of his experiments in photography.

Polaroids: Mapplethorpe presents the early, instant images as seen through the nascent artist's eye. This exhibition of 92 Polaroids, chosen from a collection of 1,500 of Mapplethorpe's first images, are notable for their high contrast, softness and DIY simplicity in terms of composition. These portraits of friends and lovers, still lifes and nude studies mark a complete contrast from the highly stylised studio shots that made him famous in his later career, and offer a compelling insight into Mapplethorpe's creative development as a photographer. **Jeff Meyer**



© ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE

Share your views and opinions with fellow AP readers every week

Letters



Inspirational

I enjoyed the *News* section looking at *This week in 1910* (AP 4 July), which extolled the 'photographic virtues of caravanning'. It reminded

me of some photos that I think were taken by my great-great-grandfather Thomas Hurst-Hodgson. He was a wealthy businessman who loved technology; he was a founder member of the RAC and in 1917 he founded what became Plessey Electronics, though he sold his shares before it made a lot of money! I don't know if he read AP but perhaps these photos were inspired by your article?

Gavin McLelland,
via email



An official pain

I feel I must take issue with your issue about being the 'unofficial' wedding photographer (AP 11 July). As a professional wedding photographer myself, in a time when it is increasingly difficult generating business, the last thing we need are 'unofficial' wedding photographers diluting sales.

The art of wedding photography takes skill and experience. We hear so many stories of friends being asked to provide the photographs and the couples being disappointed with the results, and I feel your issue is only likely to increase that possibility. We already have to contend with 'Uncle Fred' and his DSLR standing behind us after we have composed our formal groups, but the presence of an 'unofficial' photographer, possibly with a list of photographs he or she has been asked to take by the couple, is likely to cause friction to say the least.

I applaud you in enlightening us on new techniques, but please don't target a specific area that is already

suffering from the present financial climate – it's not helpful!

Mike Tozer, Wiltshire

Warming to digital

There are many things that my DSLR can do that are not possible with my old 6x7cm roll film camera. I recently saw a professional wedding photographer at work with his Nikon outfit, arranging the bride and her two bridesmaids on a small green. Using the quick release snaps on a tripod he raised the camera up and down, and although I didn't see the results he had a zoom lens to frame the scene. He used a Nikon Speedlight SB-600 flashgun for fill-in flash and was professional throughout.

What made him different was that his left arm was missing. Digital technology allowed him to use his skill and knowledge where film might have been a problem; changing a memory card is surely easier than reloading film cassettes or even swapping film backs.

I still prefer my rollfilm camera, but

this professional made me look at digital in a new light. I never saw his photographs, but by the way he took the pictures I bet they were good and the bride satisfied.

Bob Black, London N13

Sad to see you go

Reading about the final demise of Kodachrome film in AP 11 July stirred up a few memories. I shot my first roll almost 50 years ago; it was Princess Margaret's wedding and we students had been given a day off. I shot the film on a walk along the river Arun. They came out well and even today are as good as they were when that yellow box first dropped through the letterbox. Kodachrome 1 was very popular; its saturated colours and sharp contours were much appreciated. Even the most pallid complexion appeared sun-tanned when the image was projected.

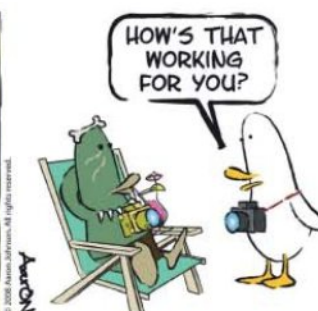
Then in the early '60s came Kodachrome 2, with a speed of 25 ASA. I remember its muted colours



Letter of the week

wins a 20-roll pack of 36-exposure Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 print film or a Fujifilm 2GB media card (in a choice of CompactFlash, SD, xD or Memory Stick)*. The sender of every letter published receives a free roll of Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 36-exposure film worth £4.99

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Compact gold

I love compact digital cameras and think they're great, so it was refreshing to see an article extolling their virtues (*How to get the best from a... digital compact*, AP 18 July). I owned a couple of DSLRs in the past but never really got on with them so I returned to a compact. I now use a Canon PowerShot A720 for my 'serious' photography and a tiny Casio that I always carry with me.

I also enjoyed Steph Hynes' picture of Times Square in *Appraisal* in the same issue. It's amazing how good an image can be taken on a mobile phone. I always remember a picture taken on a camera phone in a railway carriage on the London Underground in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist bombings in 2005 that conveyed the chaos of the scene with great effect.

My first digital camera was a Fujifilm @xia IX 100, the digital equivalent of a box brownie camera. It was only one megapixel, with fixed focus and no LCD – certainly not a patch on Steph's camera phone! I've attached a picture I took of Brixham harbour taken in 2002 during a very heavy rainstorm. It's not perfect but I like it. **Eric Lewtas, Staffordshire**



and extreme sharpness. After that came Kodachrome 64 and 200, but soon after there was growing competition from Fijichrome Velvia and its popularity waned.

Its archival permanence will ensure that Kodachrome images will be around for many years to come. I am surprised at how well images scan that were taken decades ago.

Brian Davis, Essex

It's genius!

In *Backchat* in AP 4 July, Jonathan Smith voiced some criticism of the BBC programme *Genius of Photography*. I would like to defend the series as I think it is the best series of programmes about photography ever made. It deals with the working practices of important photographic artists and current critical thinking about photography. These photographers may be new to readers of *Amateur Photographer*, but they are working today and are pushing the boundaries of what photography can offer. I realise that some familiar names were not included, but a series

like this could not hope to include every photographer. Today, photojournalism is not as important as it once was, as photography is considered more as an art form and this must be reflected in any critical analysis of photography. As the series is now on DVD, I shall order a copy and continue to draw inspiration from it.

Jonathan Williams, Essex

I have to agree, Jonathan – Damien Demolder, Editor

Where are they?

Your recent article on photo albums (*Making a Wedding Album*, AP 11 July) was very nice, but why in this digital age has nobody come up with any albums for the new size prints? Everywhere I go it's still 6x4in. It's rather annoying!

Gavin McGrath, London E9

It drives me mad too. I want inkjet paper in photo sizes as well, like 10x8in, for example, not A4 – Damien Demolder, Editor

Back Chat

AP reader **Neil Taylor** wonders how we can trust photography when there is so much digital trickery

With apologies to Harold Macmillan, we photographers have never had it so good. Quality cameras no longer cost six months' wages, newsagent's shelves bulge with magazines drawing on over a century's worth of advice, and the internet offers the ability to disseminate images worldwide almost instantaneously without a publisher in sight. But what about tomorrow's historians? Just as today we have only hand-produced illustrations from pre-Fox Talbot days, will the future view our photographs with the same dispensation we allow for the artistic licence of previous ages?

Despite the old adage that the camera never lies, we all know it has always been able to bend the truth with adroit use of focal lengths, filters, exposure and darkroom wizardry. These capabilities, were always the preserve of the elite. Today the scope to enhance, combine and amend images is enormous, and increases day by day, both technologically and demographically. With it comes a growing acceptance that procedures are part of the normal photographic process.

There has been great debate in the railway press on the use of

“As strange as it may sound, could the humble Lomo prove to be a more reliable witness than a top-of-the-range Canon or Nikon?”

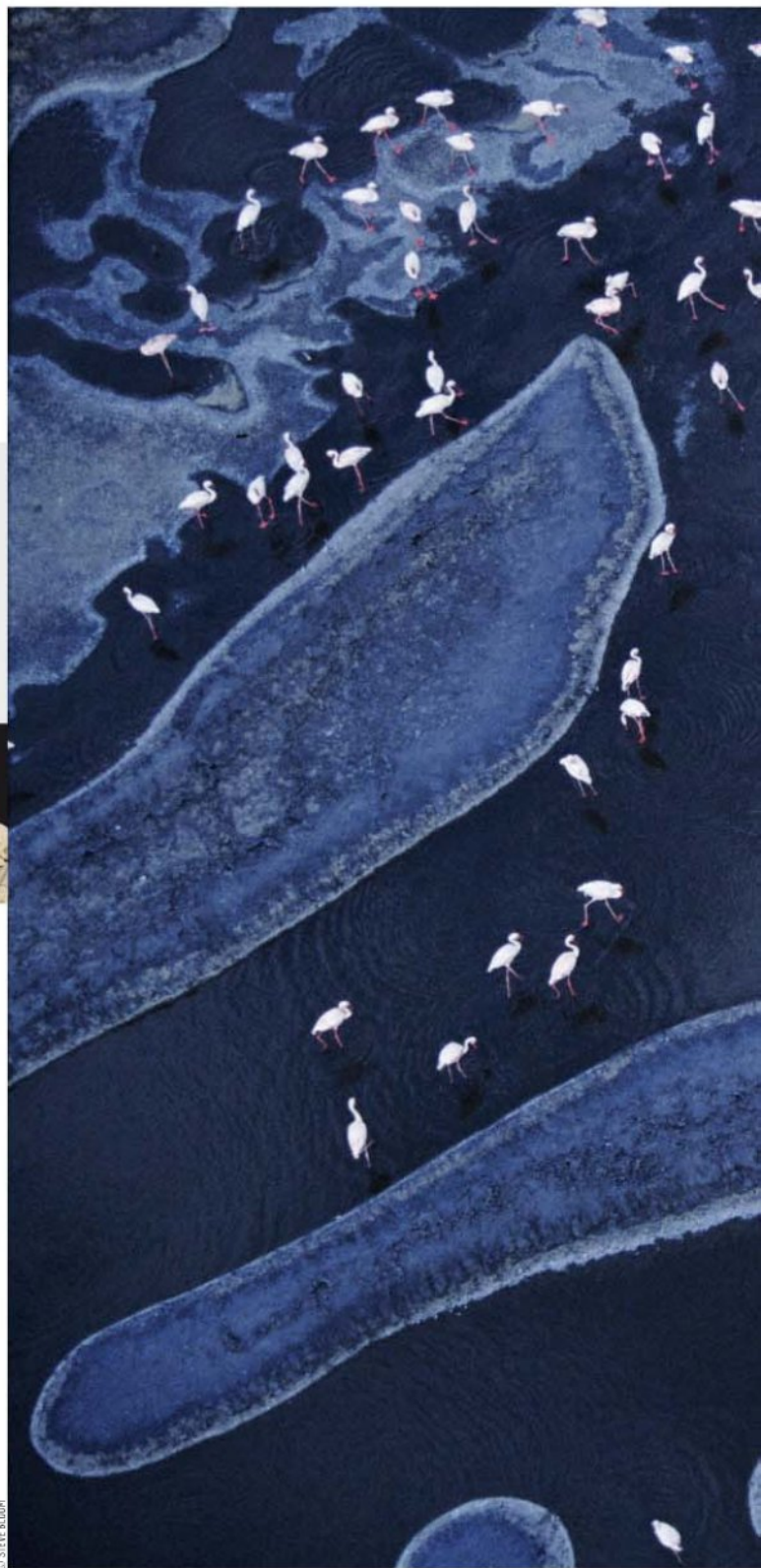
manipulated pictures, with questions of their credibility. Even in a community, famous for its accurate recording of information, several doctored images have unwittingly been published by long-established and respected publications. Until recently most contributors worked with

colour slide film, which is virtually impossible to alter once the shutter has clicked, but now digital dominates. Recently I met a thoroughly modern devotee. I vaguely knew his name from his published picture credits, of which he was justifiably proud, but his assertion that he could remove an offending radio mast from a shot in two minutes slightly troubled me. A visit to his website, provided me with proof of his editing skill, but left me feeling uneasy. Of course, to him the end justified the means, but I wonder if it is not more imaging than recording? If this trend continues what will the future know of 2009? Carefully staged media events, edited shots of individuals, paparazzi shots or passport photographs. Will the ephemera – which often tells more than the planned subject, and which is often caught by accident using less-sophisticated equipment in the days when cropping meant reaching for a pair of scissors – remain? As strange as it may sound, could the humble Lomo prove to be a more reliable witness than a top-of-the-range Canon or Nikon? History will have the final judgement, but we must continue to give it material to consider.

Your thoughts or views (about 500 words) should be sent to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication



Photo Insight



© STEVE BLOOM

STEVE BLOOM
EXPLAINS HOW
HE USED A FAST
SHUTTER SPEED AND
PUSH-PROCESSED HIS
FILM TO CREATE THIS
AERIAL IMAGE

I WAS sitting in the back of an ultra-light aircraft flying over Lake Magadi in Kenya when I took this image. Flamingos were wading in the channels between the salt lakes, feeding on crustaceans and algae. From the air they appear as bright marks against the blue water.

I loaded my Canon EOS-1N with Fujichrome Provia 100F. This film gives very rich colour saturation and has accentuated the blue tones of the water and salt lakes. Film grain can add atmosphere to an image, especially in a contrasty scene like this where there is lots of texture.

The scene was rushing by at great speed and I was looking almost directly below. You only have a few seconds to capture an image before the scene changes, so fast reactions are crucial. I was constantly looking for interesting patterns forming and waited until I had a balanced composition before pressing the shutter.

Working in aperture priority mode at f/5.6, I used a shutter speed of approximately 1/1000sec. This meant I was able to freeze the action. Push-processing the film allowed me to use a faster shutter speed (see *Talking technique*). If I had taken this image digitally I would have set my camera to a high ISO so I could use an even faster shutter speed.

I used a 70–200mm lens with a

The AP experts

Each week, one of our team of experts of Steve Bloom, David Clapp, Clive Nichols and Tom Mackie will reveal the secrets behind one of their great images. This week it's Steve Bloom

STEVE BLOOM Wildlife
The world's leading wildlife photographer is bringing his expertise to AP. Steve has written dozens of books on wildlife photography



maximum aperture of f/2.8. I tend not to use the widest aperture of my lens unless I want to significantly reduce my depth of field, but in aerial photography everything is in the same plane of focus so there isn't a 'depth of field' as such. I wanted to fit as many of the flamingos in the frame as I could so I wasn't zoomed in very far.

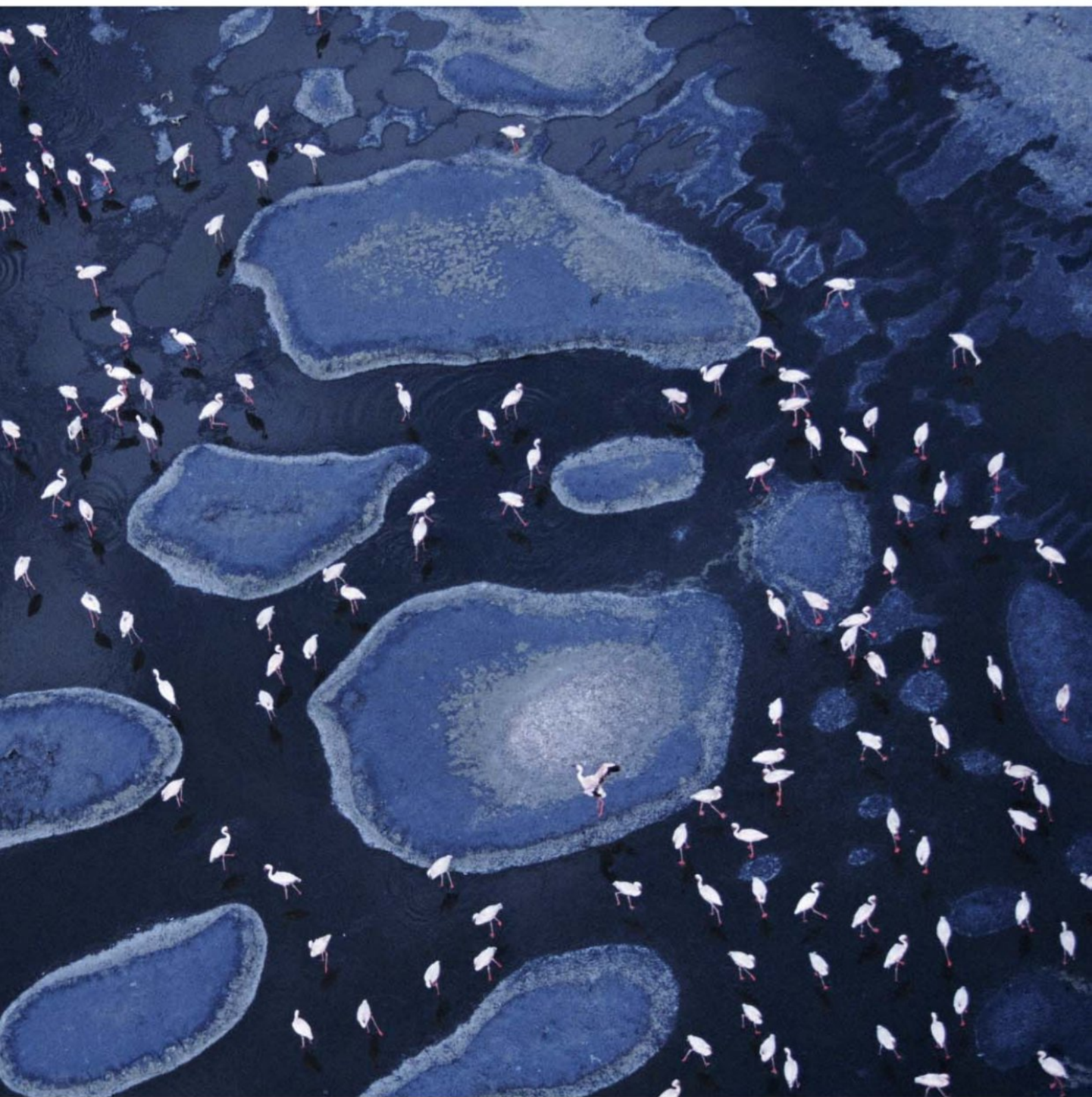
When photographing from an aircraft, I never brace my camera against the side of the plane. Instead, I hold it close to my body, which helps absorb some of the vibrations from the engine. Panning with the subject also minimises camera shake and the lens image stabiliser also comes in useful.

Some of the land formations we flew over were lighter than others, so I kept an eye on my exposure and stopped down if necessary. For aerial photography I tend to set my camera to average metering, especially for shots like this where I want an even exposure across the image. I always try to get the exposure right in-camera, but in Photoshop it is possible to 'rescue' the brightest parts of an image if there is some detail in the highlights to begin with. Apart from small adjustments to the contrast there, I did very little post-processing.

When I look at this image I think of the miracle of nature. When you see the world like this, it is a reminder of our responsibility to protect it. **AP**

To see more images by Steve, visit www.stevebloom.com. Steve's book 'Untamed', published by Abrams, is priced £15 and is available from www.stevebloomshop.com. As part of Amateur Photographer's 125th anniversary celebrations Steve is hosting a wildlife photography seminar on 14 October 2009. For more information visit <http://www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/features> or call 0203 148 4321





Talking technique

With digital cameras it is possible to use ISO sensitivity settings as high as 1600 or 3200, and to change the ISO setting with each exposure, but with film you are restricted by the speed of the emulsion you are using.

Push processing is a technique that creates the effect of using higher sensitivity film. The technique involves rating the film at a higher ISO speed. This is useful in situations where you need a fast shutter speed. With aerial photography you need to go for the fastest shutter speed possible because there is a lot of engine vibration, which can cause camera shake. The aircraft is also moving

very quickly above the subject, so a fast shutter speed is essential for freezing the moving subject. Once I had loaded my Canon EOS-1N with the ISO 100 film, I set my camera to expose for ISO 200. A film rated at ISO 200 is a 'push' of one stop, for example. The push-processing takes place at the developing stage, when the film is overdeveloped in the lab to compensate

for underexposure. The lab technician is given instructions to develop the film for the new ISO setting, in this case ISO 200. The downside is an increase in 'noise'. Fortunately, Fujichrome Provia 100F, which is the film I was using, has a very fine grain and can be push-processed by up to two stops with only a minimal amount of additional grain.

Insider knowledge



Amateur Photographer's guide to Britain's best photo locations. This week... **Staithes**

David Lewins



Occupation: Visual information design

Favourite photographers: Joe Cornish and Tony Howell, among others
Favourite location: Scottish Highlands and Cumbria
Photographic approach: 'While there are many photographers I admire, I try not to study their work too much to allow my own individual style to develop'

ASK any photographer the best place to take pictures in the north of England and the reply will be North Yorkshire's Whitby. This quintessential seaside town is one of the most photographed places in England, yet just eight miles away is another picturesque location, a village so quaint you can't even bring your car.

The seaside village of Staithes (known as 'Steers' by the locals) used to be one of the largest fishing centres in England. These days, only one fishing boat works full time from the harbour, down from 80 at the turn of the last century. Unlike

a model or actress at this age, Staithes relies on its looks to make money – and its looks are something else.

Divided by the Roxby Beck river and nestled among some hills along the North Sea coast, Staithes is full of narrow lanes and small passageways. Only one road takes you into the village, and parking is reserved for locals. Staithes is a snapshot of a Britain that no longer exists and offers plenty of opportunities for stunning pictures. Our expert David Lewins is a keen visitor and shares his favourite locations within the village.



The classic view Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 12-24mm, 150sec at f/14, ISO 100



Only locals are allowed to drive in Staithes. Visitors must park their cars in a car park on top of a hill just outside the village and walk down. This spot is on a narrow footpath into town and is the classic view of Staithes. Everyone who visits takes this picture. I've no idea what makes this view more classic than others, but it appeals to me because of the high vantage point, which gives you the fullest view of Staithes. With a wide focal length you can show how

compact the village is, its proximity to the sea and how Cowbar Nab, the cliff to the right, and the other cliffs form the harbour. It's like looking back in time.

Normally, I meter from the water, but the tide wasn't in for this shot. Instead, I used the white houses at the top of the hill on the right. By taking my exposure from bright or reflective elements in the scene, I can preserve my highlights. It's much easier to rescue detail from underexposed shadows than from overblown highlights.

NEED TO KNOW...

How to get there

There is no rail service to Staithes. It is only accessible by car, and even then you must park in a car park on the hill just outside of the village, as only locals are allowed to park in the centre of town. From the north, take the A19 to Middlesbrough. Take the A66 east, then the A1085 coast road. Turn left on to the A174 and follow the signs to Staithes. From the south, follow the A19 to Thirsk and take the A170 towards Pickering. At Scarborough take the A171 until Whitby. Then take the A174 to Staithes.

Parking

You can park your car in the car park just above Staithes and walk down the hill into the village. The walk takes seven or eight minutes, says David, but be warned that it is quite steep.

Where to stay

Staithes abounds with B&Bs, despite its small size. What's more, Whitby is only eight miles to the south, making it quite an easy commute.

DID YOU KNOW...

Staithes' most famous resident

Captain James Cook called Staithes his home from 1745-46. The famed explorer worked as a grocer's apprentice here just before he moved to Whitby and joined the Royal Navy.

You might remember...

In the early 1990s, a very rare fossil of a sea-going dinosaur was discovered after rocks fell from a stretch of cliffs between Staithes and Port Mulgrave, and a project continues to remove its bones from the rock face. The coast here is a treasure trove for fossils of ammonites.

Bold colour

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 12-24mm, 1/160sec at f/16, ISO 100



Staithes is known for its narrow lanes, and I was looking for this type of shot when I was drawn to the Cod and Lobster public house at the bottom of the main street, on the very edge of the harbour. The instinct is to frame the pub against the sea, but I liked how its bright yellow and red exterior contrasted with the blue railing, the light blue buildings in the middle ground and the rich blue sky overhead. Because there was so much blue on the right of my frame, I included a large amount of the pub on the left to give it prominence and emphasise this contrast. I then took the exposure from the white building where the two cars are parked, underexposing by 2/3 stop to make sure I didn't blow out the dramatic cloud formations. My 12-24mm lens is so bulbous at the front that you can't use any filters, so I tend to underexpose when I'm using it to compensate for the sky.

Quaint cottages

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 12-24mm, 1/50sec at f/16, ISO 100



I liked how this building was perched on such a high part of the interior of the village. I also liked the alleyway with the steps leading back to the harbour. Being early in the year it was cold, and there was smoke coming out of the chimney. I took a wider view to include the lower buildings to the left. Although I tried it with the 17mm lens, I couldn't get everything in that I wanted so I used the 12-24mm optic. This helped me include the fence in the bottom left as a partial lead-in and break up the grass in the foreground. I took my exposure from the door of the cream building.

To the left of the door of the cottage is a small gate. Further to the left is a washing-line post. Beside that post was a large telegraph pole with lots of wires. I cloned that out because it was too distracting.

Framing

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 17-40mm, 1/50sec at f/16, ISO 100



Harbours offer endless possibilities, and Staithes harbour is no exception. Fishermen leave their lobster pots on the harbour, and I wanted to include the whole of one within my frame along with parts of other pots to suggest the number of them. I also wanted to show the reflections of the buildings on the water and the full cliffside. It was ambitious! I experimented with a number of angles, and this covered most of my needs. I would have liked to include the slipway between the pots, but I couldn't do that without losing a lot of sky and gaining foreground. The sky was quite dramatic, so I opted to keep it. I then took my exposure off the white reflections in the water. It was tricky getting it right with all the elements in the background, so I used a grad filter to help preserve detail. Perhaps what impresses me most about this shot is that I managed to take it handheld at 1/50sec with two dogs on leads! In fact, all my pictures in the village are taken handheld while holding on to my two dogs.

Insider knowledge
The coble, a traditional flat-bottomed, high-bowed fishing boat, is made in Staithes

A different take

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 17-40mm, 238secs and 30secs at f/11, ISO 200



This is the same classic view as on page 15, but I wanted to do something different with it. Staithes is a great place for night photography because there are so few people out and it glows amid the pitch black. I like long exposures at night because they enhance this glow.

Being such a popular spot, I knew exactly where to stand. The hardest part was setting up my camera in total darkness. There are no streetlights on the hill leading back to the car park, so I was working with a torch. In daylight you would give this scene a much wider view to include the sea and surrounding cliffs, but at night you have large dark patches in the picture where these would be. The village felt a little 'loose', so I cropped the image to take out some of the sky.

I exposed for the buildings, and then shot two frames – one at 238secs and one at 30secs. I did this to capture both the highlights and shadows more accurately.

Sunrise & sunset

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 17-40mm, 1/13sec at f/9, ISO 100



The two arms that form Staithes harbour are the best places in the village to set up your camera and take dramatic sunrises and sunsets out across the sea. Here I was on the left arm with the village behind me. I got to Staithes early, intent on getting one of its patented sunrises, but struggled with a large fog bank. I waited it out and eventually the sun made it over the top of the fog. It was then I noticed a nice reflection of the sun streaking across the water. I knew it would only be there for about five minutes, so I had to work quickly. I used a tripod for this shot, as well as 0.9 and 0.6 grad filters. I also underexposed, as my first shot burned out the reflection. I started to compensate, stopping down in thirds to bring out the rich colour. I got this final image at -1EV.

Insider knowledge
A mile to the north of Staithes is Boulby Cliff, the highest cliff in England

Using triangles

Canon EOS 1D Mark III, 12-24mm, 4secs at f/8, ISO 400



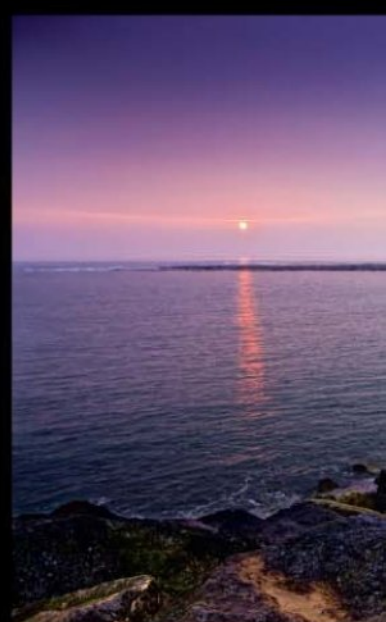
There was a wonderful tranquility that morning and everything seemed to glow. Only one boat was on the beach, and it was the same colour as the sky, which drew me in.

This scene illustrates a common theme in my compositions: triangles. I trained as an artist and read a lot of art history. If you look at a Madonna and child image, they all use triangles. With Madonna, the head is at the apex of the triangle, while the sides are the arms. Your eye follows the arms down to the child. Inspired by this, I look for triangles to include in my own images. By framing the boat on the left, your eye travels the ropes up to the boat, then follows the village lights out through the right side of the frame, forming a triangle on its side in the right-hand corner, leading you through the image. This is what I want in my compositions.

Do you have intimate knowledge of a great photo location?

Share it with your fellow readers, see your work in print and earn yourself £100 in the process. Submit a collection of at least ten images (JPEG or TIFF) with a brief explanation of where the location is and what is special about it. We'll call to interview you about the details, so you don't have to write anything, but make sure the pictures are centred around one place. We are looking for the inside track on well-known as well as new locations anywhere in the UK, the best subjects to focus on and the best angles, weather conditions and times of day. Send a CD/DVD in the first instance to 'Inside Knowledge' at the address shown on page 3. See www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/knowledge for more info.

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PC: Perspective Control PC-E: Tilt/Shift-Perspective Control

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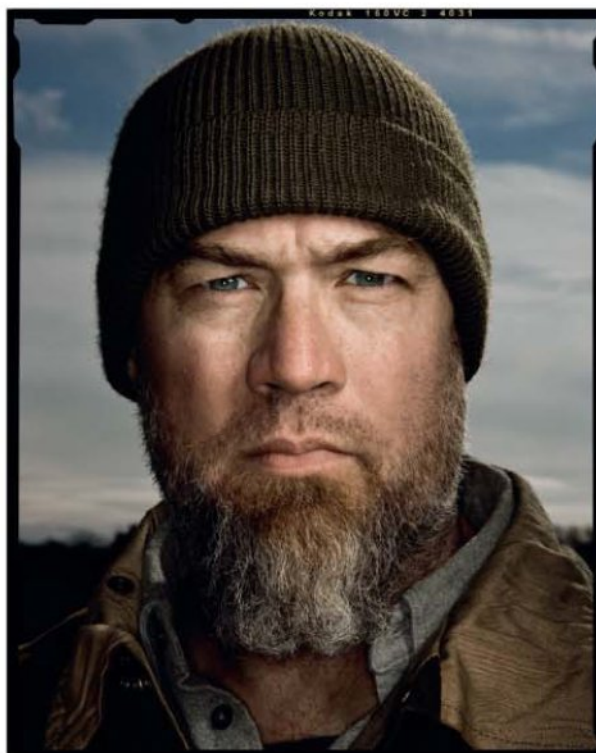
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Soft lighting and
subdued colours
complement each
other in Dan's
image of actor
Sandra Bullock





Winters' subtle approach

Photographer **Dan Winters** subtly moulds light and colour to create his intimate portraits. He tells **Gemma Padley** why he prefers the understated approach

EVERYDAY we are bombarded with brightly coloured images in the form of advertising or our general surroundings. 'Bold is beautiful!'; 'Bigger is better!'; 'More! More! More!' they scream. But sometimes understated colour is equally, if not more, powerful than its gregarious companion.

The art of subtlety lies at the heart of Dan Winters' portrait photography. His manipulation of light and colour is not exaggerated or garish – instead he uses soft, simple lighting to draw the viewer into his images.

Dan, 48, who lives in Austin, Texas, started his career as an editorial photographer. It was while shooting lifestyle assignments for newspapers that he decided to concentrate on magazine portraiture. Now internationally renowned for his iconic portraits, Dan has photographed many of the world's biggest stars and most influential figures for publications including

Rolling Stone, *Esquire* and the *New York Times Magazine*. A selection of these portraits has been collected in his monograph, *Periodical Photographs*, recently published by Aperture Foundation. We have seen these faces a thousand times before, but Dan's portraits emanate intrigue and mystery. There is a stillness and quietness about his work that commands attention.

'When I first started working as a photographer I was trying to find my way in terms of technique,' says Dan. 'I was looking for a place to fit into the commercial world of photography. I don't consider myself to have a particular 'style'. I prefer to think of myself as having an awareness and sensibility that I can turn to any subject. I try to create a likeness that feels intimate and perhaps slightly vulnerable. I try to be flattering but in a human way.'

The images from his book were taken using a Sinar F-1 5x4in camera loaded with Kodak Portra 160VC colour negative film. He uses two main lenses: a Schneider 110mm f/5.6 Super-Symmar XL Wide Angle, and a Rodenstock Apo-Macro-Sironar 180mm f/5.6 for tighter shots. There is a painterly quality about Dan's images, and while he doesn't try to recreate specific painting effects, his images hark back to the sensibilities of Renaissance masters who





explored the interaction between light and shadow and the impact it could create. 'I work with colours I feel complement each other,' he says. 'Subtle, subdued shades; greys and greens work well for portraits. The colours in the Heath Ledger (right) and Leonardo DiCaprio (opposite page) portraits, for example, are very earthy and smooth.'

Dan has certain lighting set-ups he uses regularly and once in the studio or on location, he'll decide which one will work best for that particular subject. 'I have a standard lighting "toolbox" and ask myself, "does this subject need more controlled, directional light, or do I want a softer, more glowing effect?" I don't have just one way of working and I tend to go with what feels right at the time.'

He mostly uses a simple, two-light setup – a key light and a fill – and occasionally a third light for the background. 'I work hard on my lighting but I try not to make it complex,' he says. 'If you use sidelights, backlights and hairlights it takes away that connection with reality. I want to make my lighting as gentle and as timeless as possible. I use several large, black cloth-covered panels to direct the light across to the subject and I also use umbrella lights (usually three feet in diameter). I sometimes use a large Profoto Octa Bank softbox for fill and key lighting, and I use flashguns for all my images: a Profoto Pro-7b flash head for outside shots and a Profoto Pro 2400 for studio work.'



In these images of actors Tom Hanks (left) and Heath Ledger, muted tones and subtle colours create emotionally-charged portraits

For outdoor shoots there is light from the sky to consider. 'A bright sky can make getting the right exposure difficult,' Dan says. 'I'm not keen on making the sky look really dark. I prefer a more subtle effect and to balance the sky with the light on my subject. Overcast days are my favourite days to shoot, because I don't have to battle with direct sunlight'.

A thorough understanding of the properties of light is key to creating special lighting effects, he adds. 'It's all about seeing where the light falls on your subject. The skill comes from controlling the light and using it to intricately sculpt a scene.'

Many of Dan's images are reflective, but others have a more light-hearted feel. 'Humorous shots can work if the person is committed to an idea,' he says. 'I did some funny shots of Brad Pitt recently where we created a concept and character, and built a set around one particular idea. I like to play around with my compositions and I keep a notebook for



Dan used a Sinar F-1 5x4in camera for the images in his book



Dan's camera gear

Dan shot all the images in his book on film, but he does also use digital SLR cameras. 'The digital darkroom is a great gift,' he says. 'Historically, colour film was so difficult to control and you always had to be aware of stray colour shifts. I still shoot film but digital allows you to work fast, and it is great because you can see your results straightaway. For years I felt digital was inferior to film, but the DSLRs are so good now. This is the first year I've been shooting with digital regularly. I use a Canon EOS-1DS Mark III and a Canon EOS 5D Mark II. I also use a Hasselblad H1 medium-format camera with a CFV 39-megapixel digital back.'

'There is a certain amount of standard retouching – dodging and burning and adjusting colour contrast, for example – that I'll do. I'll remove stray hairs or broken blood vessels but I don't go crazy with the retouching. I have a retoucher who works with me, but I'm very 'hands-on'. I'll tell him the areas of an image I want adjusted and what I want done, and he makes those adjustments. To me, film and digital are just different capture mediums and when I'm photographing, I'm concentrating more on the shoot and less on the format I'm using.'



Talking technique

Dan used two umbrella lights to light Leonardo DiCaprio for this image: one to the right of his Sinar F-1 5x4in camera with a 240mm lens, at a 4 o'clock angle, and the other next to the camera. The umbrellas helped to create a concentration of light in the centre of the subject. He also placed a background light just behind Leo. Dan positioned several large, black cloth-covered panels or 'flags' close to the actor, hidden just out of the frame, to direct the light across his face. He took this image at approximately 1/125sec at f/32 using Kodak Portra 160VC film.



Dan built a specially designed set for this image of actor Helen Mirren, commissioned by the *New York Times Magazine*

sketching out ideas. In the Helen Mirren image (see above), for example, I'd seen a photo of a 19th century photography studio with a huge window and sketched an idea around this. When the *New York Times Magazine* asked me to photograph Helen I suggested this idea and we built a set. I try to make my sets look like actual locations – scraped, scratched and real.'

While imagery is often an important part of Dan's work, he doesn't always create a 'concept'. Sometimes he approaches a shoot with few or no creative expectations. 'I might set up a "stage" but I don't necessarily have any pre-determined ideas of how the images will look. I enjoy being open and allowing the scene to take shape and unfold naturally.'

During a shoot, Dan talks his subject through what he is doing and there is an underlying level of trust and mutual respect. 'The subject's input comes from the emotions they are subconsciously emitting,' he says. 'Most celebrities are used to being in front of the camera, so there isn't the same sense of awkwardness you get when photographing someone who isn't used to being photographed.' Sometimes Dan asks his subjects to look to the side or downwards. 'Breaking eye contact allows the viewer to study a person without being put off by their gaze,' he says. 'When a subject is not looking at the camera the effect is more unguarded.'

A deep knowledge of the subject isn't necessary, though, Dan explains. Far more important is an understanding of human nature. 'The part of a subject's character the photographer decides to draw out is one of many facets that make up that person,' he says. 'To create successful portraits you need to be able to have a reverence and respect for the people you are photographing. Good people skills are essential, but it's not about schmoozing.' **AP**



Getting the look... Dan Winters

While Dan Winters was working on a feature about Route 66 for *Texas Monthly* in 2002, he came across Lonnie Blankenship driving his elderly American car. After flagging Lonnie down, Dan asked if he could take his portrait by a billboard a few miles down the road. 'We drove to the spot,' recalls Dan, 'and parked his car so the billboard was where I wanted it to be in the composition. I asked him to turn his head to the left and the wind caught his hair.' Using two battery-powered flashlights he had available, Dan lit the shot using one light as the main light source, and the second as a fill light. The lights removed the shadows caused by the bright midday Texas sun and the result makes Lonnie look like the star of his own Hollywood film.

Elements

To recreate Dan Winters' image I first had to source a suitable car. In the end I managed to get hold of a classic MG in navy blue, which closely matched the style, if not the shape, of the car in the original image.

The second important factor is the location. I wasn't going to be able to venture to a parched roadside in Texas, so instead opted for a slightly dry field in Kent. A line of trees and bushes replaced the horizon and roadside billboard sign.

Angle

With the American car being somewhat higher than the lower MG sports car, I was going to have to shoot from a different angle. Dan shot Lonnie Blankenship from below, looking up at him in the driver's seat. This wasn't possible in my shot, as the mirrors of the MG would have obscured the subject's face. Instead I raised the position of the camera so that it was roughly eye level to the subject.

The setup



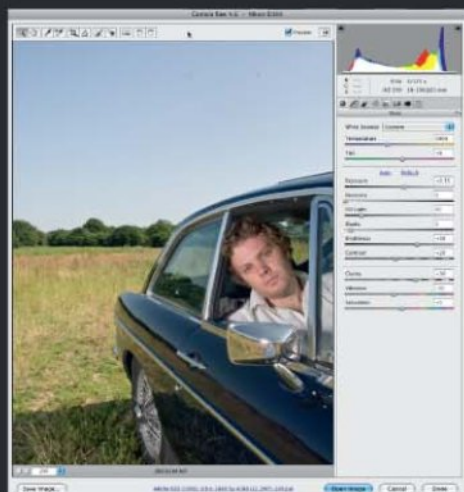
Lighting and exposure

Unlike Dan, I only had a single, battery-powered studio flashlight and a reflector. Fortunately, the silver side of the reflector was more than bright enough to act as a fill light. In fact, the reflector was so bright, my subject found it difficult to open his eyes when I reflected the light back in his direction. To counter this, I asked him to close his eyes, and only open them for the brief moment it took to take the shot.

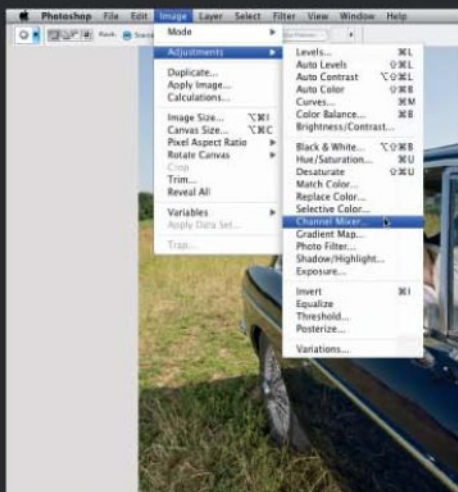
I placed the flash light

around 45° to the left of the camera, 7ft from the subject at his head height. I positioned the reflector just below the camera, angling light onto the subject to soften the light from the flash.

With the camera at ISO 200, I set an exposure of 1/125sec at f/14. With the ambient light, this produced an image dark enough to keep the sky bright, but without burning out the highlights, which gave me enough flexibility to use the flash and reflector to light the subject's face while keeping background detail.



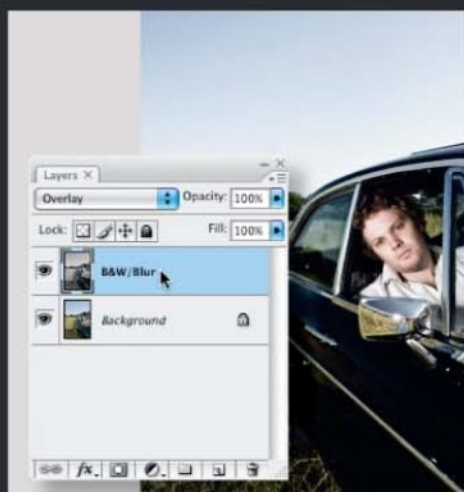
1 I opened the raw image in Adobe Camera Raw and made slight adjustments to it by changing the Fill Light to +15 and adjusting the Vibrance and Saturation. I also altered the microcontrast by setting the Clarity level to +30.



2 I duplicated the background layer (Layer>Duplicate Layer), then converted this layer to monochrome using the Channel Mixer. I then used the Red channel to alter the contrast of the image.



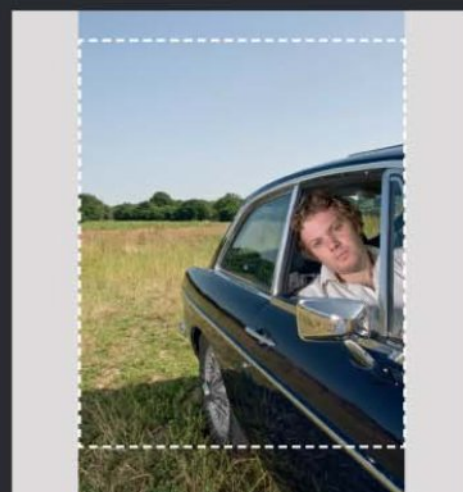
3 Using Gaussian Blur on the duplicate layer helps to blend the effect when we come to blend the layers in the next stage.



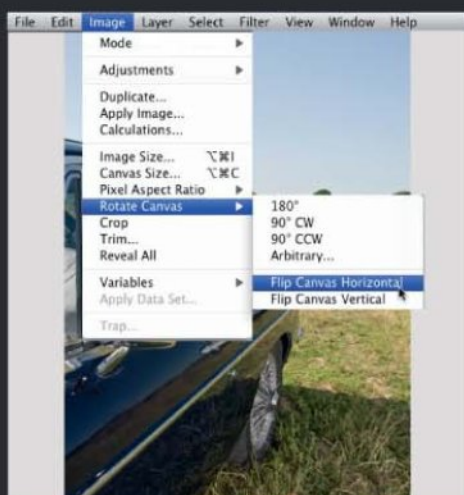
4 Select the b&w/blur layer and change the blending mode to Overlay. This will use the contrast from the b&w layer, and the slight blur will add softness to the contrast. However, the overall effect is too harsh.



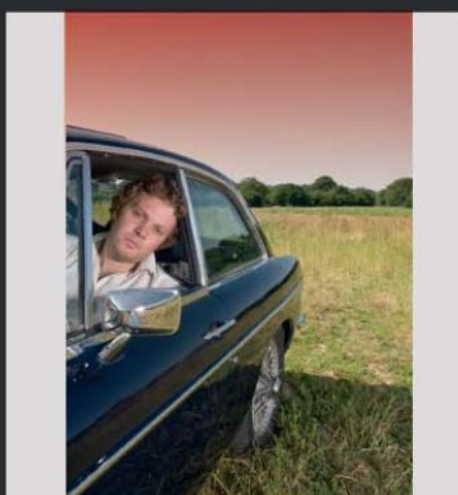
5 To reduce the effect of the b&w/blur layer, I have reduced its Opacity by moving the slider to around 45%. This gives the image a more filmic quality.



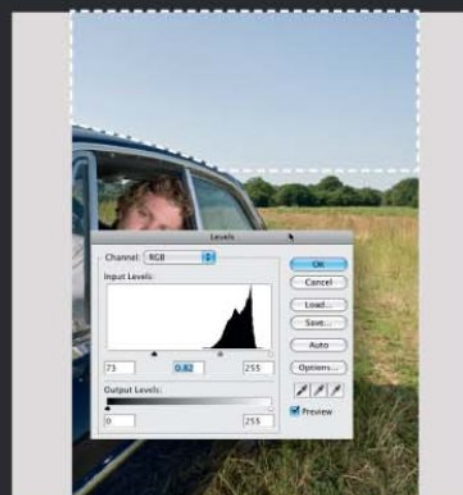
6 Dan shot his image on 5x4in format film. To reproduce this I have set the Marquee tool to a fixed-aspect ratio of 4 (Width) by 5 (Height) and then cropped the image appropriately.



7 As the car in Dan's image is American, the driver is on the opposite side. I've selected Image>Rotate>Flip Horizontal to replicate this.



8 To darken the sky I have selected the Quick Mask mode and used a black-to-transparent gradient from the top of the sky to the horizon. To prevent any changes affecting the trees and car, I painted over the mask with white.



9 Exit Quick Mask mode and there will be a selection highlighting the sky. Invert this (Select>Invert) and adjust the Levels to darken the sky. As a Gradient Fill was selected, the effect will blend with the rest of the image.





© PETE BRIDGWOOD

Masters of Vision

Next month sees a new exhibition of landscapes by the best of Britain's emerging and established talent, among them **Charlie Waite**, **Pete Bridgwood** and AP's **Damien Demolder**

PETE Bridgwood's journey from winning our Amateur Photographer of the Year contest in 2007 to the present day has been an incredible adventure for the Nottinghamshire-based GP. Among his further accolades in other prestigious competitions and stops along the way at some of London's top landscape exhibitions, Pete was invited to stage his first solo exhibition in his home town at Southwell Minster Cathedral. The 41-image show was a great success, and when he was invited back this year he was offered the massive space of the cathedral's nave. This got Pete thinking big.

'I wanted to create something spectacular that will bring visitors to my home town and introduce Southwell to the wider art world,' Pete explains. 'The idea was to mount a major exhibition featuring the work of an established master landscape photographer and to invite some of the most talented emerging photographers to exhibit their work alongside that of a master.'

First on his agenda was to find a master photographer. He immediately thought of Charlie Waite. 'To my mind, Charlie is one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, landscape photographer in the world today,' he says. 'I spoke to Charlie and asked if he would be interested in exhibiting as master photographer and, incredibly, he accepted.'

Pete then drew up a shortlist of some of the most talented landscape photographers working in the UK. These were people, he says, from whom he has drawn great inspiration, and after some lengthy discussions with Charlie and the team at the cathedral, they arrived at a final five: Mark Gould, Jonathan Horrocks, Dav Thomas, Chris Upton and AP Editor Damien Demolder.

'Masters of Vision stems from the idea that one of the enduring lures of landscape photography

Above: Pete Bridgwood, Lochan na h'Achlaise by torchlight, Rannoch Moor

Left: Charlie Waite, Amiens, the Somme

© CHARLIE WAITE





© MARK GOULD

Mark Gould, Scotland



© DAMIEN DEMOLDER

Damien Demolder, Beltany stone circle

is the challenge of encapsulating and then transferring all the emotional constituents of a scene to the final viewer of the exhibited print and eliciting an emotional response,' Pete explains. 'The thing that's central to this process is "vision", the ability to preconceive, visualise and realise a creative goal. All the exhibiting photographers have a mastery of this process, so that's the reason for the title.'

There are no hard-and-fast themes among the exhibition's 130-plus images. Each photographer has been given carte blanche to choose and hang images as they wish, in effect designing their own section of gallery space in the cathedral's enormous nave.

'I think it's better to have variety,' says Pete. 'There are many landscape photographers out there, and they all may visit some of the same locations, but Pete believes each photographer puts his or her own stamp on a scene because everyone's experience of it is different. 'They all have their own interpretations,' he explains. 'I would actively encourage landscape photographers to visit the most iconic locations because it can be extremely challenging to create something different. The more challenging it is, the more you learn. Try new techniques and experiment; think outside the box. Try photographing in bad weather, in darkness, using outdoor flash or artificial light. If you are willing to try new things, you will start creating special images.'

That said, Pete warns there is a fine line to tread

between giving a familiar scene an original interpretation and going too far with the digital effects. 'I've certainly been guilty of pushing the saturation slider too far in the past,' he says, 'putting the emphasis on high-contrast, saturated images that force the viewer to take notice. Lightroom and Photoshop both make it very easy to achieve such effects and I'd completely support anyone who does so, as that's what art is all about.'

Pete's photographic ethos these days is wedded to what he refers to as the 'emotional transference' of a scene – an attempt to recreate visually the way you feel when interacting with a location. When you're standing on the beach listening to the waves crash against the shore, for instance, or when you're bracing yourself against the cold on a Scottish hillside and framing a misty scene, think about how you can portray these sensory experiences in your image. Perhaps a long exposure to emphasise the waves, or a strong saturation of blue to give the viewer the impression of cold can make a picture unique.

'I'm becoming obsessed with this idea of emotional transference, and I'm convinced it's a powerful key to successful imagery,' Pete says. And for this reason he says he's laying off the saturation slider. 'Nature often presents a canvas far too beautiful for digital interference, and although remaining true to its pastel palette may not maximise the drama, it often produces images that have a greater lasting appeal, that are more truthful, and more emotive.' **AP**

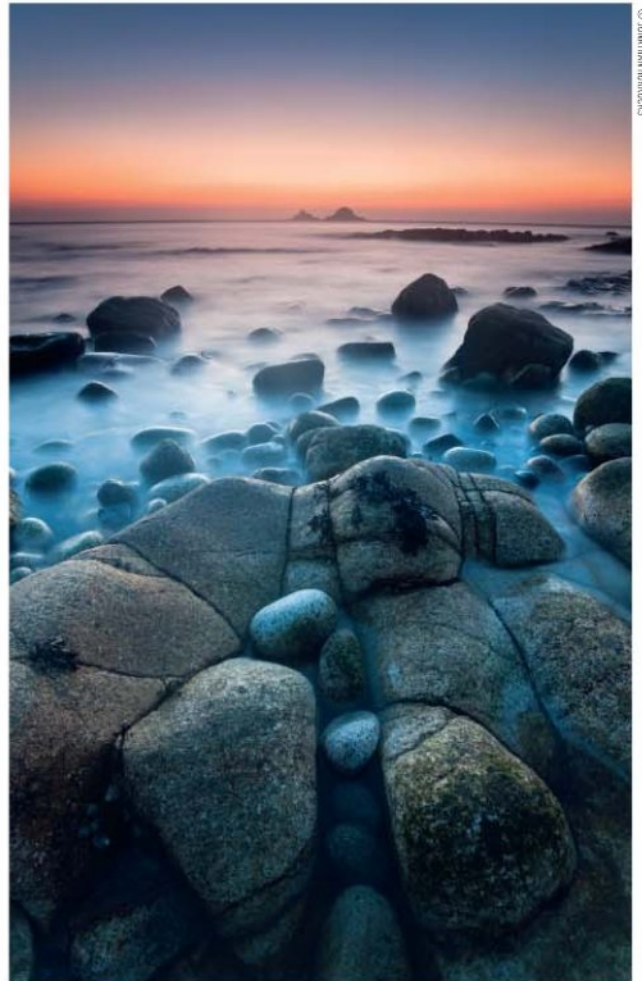


Chris Upton,
Punta San Vigilio



© DAV THOMAS

Dav Thomas, the sun over a sea of mist



© JONATHAN HORROCKS

Jonathan Horrocks, 'The foggy ruins of time', Cornwall



© CHRIS BRITTON

Amateur
Photographer
ICONS
OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Spanish surrealist Salvador Dalí, 1948. Halsmann and Dalí spent six hours creating this shot live in the studio

© PHILIPPE HALSMANN/VAGUANT PHOTOS

ICONIC PHOTOGRAPH

Dali Atomicus

Philippe Halsman



Halsman's surrealist tour de force, produced in collaboration with artist Salvador Dali, was a technical and creative triumph. **David Clark** tells the story of how it was made

PHILIPPE Halsman's 'Dali Atomicus' is a brilliantly orchestrated moment of surrealist exuberance. Its disparate elements – the floating chair, the suspended arc of water, the flying cats and Dali's crazed expression – combine to make an extraordinary photograph. It's particularly remarkable not only because it was created long before the days of digital manipulation, but also because Halsman didn't even rely on contemporary darkroom techniques to create it; the scene was shot 'live' in the studio.

When it was made, in 1948, Latvian-born Halsman was 42 and a highly regarded portrait photographer whose work often appeared in *Life* magazine. His career had initially been delayed by a spell in jail: in his early 20s he had been sentenced to ten years' imprisonment after being convicted of killing his father while on holiday with him in the Austrian Alps. Halsman always protested his innocence and was released after four years.

Afterwards he went to live in France, where in the 1930s he quickly established a reputation for his portrait and fashion work for magazines including *Vogue*. However, in 1940, when France was invaded during the Second World War, he left for the United States





A contact sheet showing some of the earlier, less-successful attempts at capturing of 'Dali Atomicus'

Photographs: A Personal Interpretation, 'Halsman got a lot of flak from cat lovers, especially the vociferous ones in England. He told these critics that the cats survived the picture session better than the exhausted humans. To celebrate, in fact, the cats ate up a very expensive can of Portuguese sardines.'

'Dali Atomicus' was published as a double-page spread in *Life* and soon after was reprinted countless times in publications around the world. Halsman went on to explore suspension further in his 'jump' photographs, which he usually shot at the end of his portrait sessions. Among the famous people he persuaded to jump for his camera were the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Richard Nixon, John Steinbeck and Marilyn Monroe.

'In a jump,' wrote Halsman, 'the subject, in a sudden burst of energy, overcomes gravity. He cannot simultaneously control his expressions, his facial and limb muscles. The mask falls. The real self becomes visible.' A collection of these playful and revealing images was published in his *Jump Book* (1959).

Halsman's reputation continued to grow and by the time he died, in 1979, he was one of America's most celebrated portrait photographers. His lifetime's work included iconic, penetrating portraits of world-famous figures including Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein. Yet the playful energy, inventiveness and technical accomplishment of 'Dali Atomicus' made this photograph one of his most memorable achievements. **AP**



Books

The books by, and about, Philippe Halsman include *Dali's Mustache* (1954), *Jump Book* (1959), *Portraits* (1983), *Halsman at Work* (1989) and *Halsman Retrospective* (1998). 'Dali Atomicus' is one of the great *Life* pictures discussed in John Loengard's book *Life: Classic Photographs: A Personal Interpretation* (1988).

Websites

A good selection of Halsman's work and a brief biography can be found on the Magnum website, www.magnumphotos.com



and began working as a freelancer for *Life* in 1942.

Halsman first met

Salvador Dali, who was also in the United States to escape the war in Europe, during a photographic assignment in 1941. Halsman's passion for surrealism and Dali's prolific creativity – coupled with his limitless desire for self-publicity – led to their collaboration on a number of projects over the next 30 years. Some of their co-produced images were published in Halsman's 1954 book *Dali's Mustache*. The most ambitious and successful image to emerge from this collaboration was 'Dali Atomicus', which was first published in *Life* magazine in August 1948.

The title is a reference to Dali's painting 'Leda Atomica', which is shown partially obscured in Halsman's picture, on the right of the frame. It depicts Dali's wife, Gala, floating above a pedestal, which itself hovers above the ground. The painting was partly inspired by the scientific discoveries of the period, particularly the discovery that, at the atomic level, particles are not physically connected – what Dali described as 'the modern "nothing touches" theory of intra-atomic physics.'

The day after Halsman had first discussed this new painting with Dali, he contacted him with an idea for a photograph. Their discussions

focused on the high-speed flash photography pioneered by Harold Eugene Edgerton in the 1930s and how suspended movement could be captured on film. After rejecting some of their more outlandish ideas for the picture – which included blowing up a chicken – Halsman and Dali agreed on the elements they would include.

On the day of the shoot, Halsman set up the 5x4in twin-lens reflex camera that he had himself designed the previous year, and suspended an easel, two Dali paintings and a stepping stool from the ceiling with wires. The photograph's complexity required lots of behind-the-scenes help. On the left, Halsman's wife Yvonne held a chair aloft, while on the right his assistants threw a bucket of water and three cats into the scene as Dali leaped in the air.

The picture depended on perfect synchronisation and positioning of all the elements and was, to say the least, a very hit-and-miss process. After each attempt, while his assistants mopped the floor, Halsman disappeared into the darkroom to develop the film and pronounce whether the shot was a success. Usually it wasn't, so they would do the whole thing again. 'Six hours and 28 throws later,' said Halsman, 'the result satisfied my striving for perfection.'

Life picture editor John Loengard later wrote in his book, *Life: Classic*

Amateur Photographer ICONS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Events of 1948

Jan

78-year-old Indian political and spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated in New Delhi

Jan

British Railways is formed after the nationalisation of railways in the UK
Czechoslovakia comes under control of the Communist Party
The United Nations establishes the World Health Organisation

Feb

April

May

The Israeli Declaration of Independence is made, establishing a Jewish homeland, and leads directly to the 1948 Arab-Israeli War

July

Nov

London hosts the 1948 Summer Olympics
In the United States, Harry S Truman is re-elected for a second term as President

Dec

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted by the United Nations General Assembly

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1 Mark Cook Kent 44pts

Samsung GX-10, 70-200mm, 1/2000sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

◆ Mark, a software developer, got fed up with staring at a computer screen all day so he bought a DSLR to help him get outdoors. As his skills grew, he developed a preference for early morning landscapes. 'This oyster fisherman was taken during the early hours on Whitstable Beach, in Kent, where I went to do some long-exposure work,' he says. 'The tide was especially low, so I wandered along to a causeway that goes out into the Thames Estuary on the west side of the harbour. As I approached, this lone figure was wading in water with a net and a bucket. The scene was mesmerising with the calmness of the sea and stillness of the turbines and no discernible horizon.' **Judges say** Beautiful and serene, like a scene from a dream. Mark has made an astounding image that is both timeless and technically superb.



2 Sean Slevin Ireland 42pts

Fujifilm FinePix S700, 46.8mm, 1/400sec at f/7, ISO 160

◆ Sean, a carpenter, has long had a passion for photography, recently switching to digital imaging. 'When I wasn't taking pictures, I could usually be found in the makeshift darkroom in my attic. Now it's in front of my computer,' he says. This shot of a lone horse was taken from his car while stopped in traffic. Later he converted it to b&w to focus on the dramatic sky and water. **Judges say** Many would have left this in colour, but Sean wisely chose black & white. The result is a very tranquil image with wonderful contrast. Simply beautiful.





3 Chris Ould Dorset 41pts

Nikon D40X, 24-120mm, 1/160sec at f/7.1, ISO 400

◆ Chris, a television script writer, only spotted by chance this sun-bleached toy boat, half submerged in a wheelbarrow full of rainwater. 'After taking this initial shot I tried a few variations, but none captured my original inspiration as much as this one,' he says. Later he adjusted the levels and saturation to add to the feel of nostalgia he associates with Kodachrome-like colours. **Judges say** Fabulous light and colour. This is a very creative and inspired image. Chris took the theme and interpreted it in a unique way.



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APOY 09

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION

In our **H₂O** round we saw everything from dew drops to crashing waves, rain and even a few morning shaves

Mark Cook, of Kent, has won first prize in our **H₂O** round of APOY, winning a Canon EOS 500D, worth £869.99, and Canon's EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens, worth £209.99. The Canon EOS 500D is a 15.1MP DSLR offering 3.4fps capture capability with up to 170 JPEG burst, as well as nine-point AF and a high ISO going up to 12,800. Canon's compact and lightweight EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 lens is perfect for outdoor shooting. In total, Mark has won £1,079.98 worth of Canon kit.

Second prize of a Canon PowerShot D10, worth £478, goes to **Sean Slevin**, of Co Wexford, Ireland. With 12.1MP, the rugged PowerShot D10 is resistant to water, shock, dust and cold, making it perfect for your summer holidays. Sean also receives a D10 Accessory Kit, worth £109, which contains a front cover set, shoulder and neck straps and more.

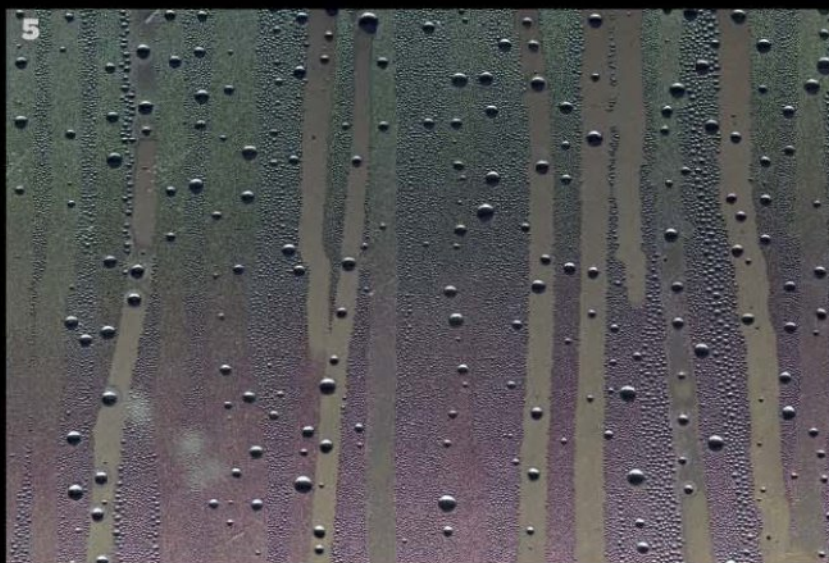
In third place, **Chris Ould**, of Dorset, will receive a Canon Digital IXUS 95 IS, worth £464. The 10MP IXUS 95 IS boasts anti-blur, scene and face detection, as well as a 3x optical zoom with optical Image Stabilizer, making it the perfect all-rounder.

The leader board

The leader board has stayed largely intact this round, with the exception of a few notable changes. A few familiar names have dropped out of the top ten, while a few others have re-emerged. Our judges had a wide and impressive range of images to choose from this month. Everyone had a unique interpretation of the theme, and choosing a winner was difficult. In the end, we feel we made the best choices.

Holding on to his spot at the top of the leader board is 2007 winner **Mani Puthuran**. **Kathy Wright** keeps apace in the second spot, followed closely by one-time leader **Barry Harrington**, who climbs the board this month with a strong finish in the top 30. **Lee Jeffries** also climbs this month, while **Adrian Hall**, **Patrick Dodds** and others hold their ground. This month's second-place winner **Sean Slevin** and **David Leatherdale** also make their first appearances in the top 10. Be sure to catch the results of Round 6, **Looking Closer**, in AP 29 August, and our announcement of Round 7 in AP 1 August.

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|--------|----|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | Mani Puthuran | 151pts | 7 | Phil Hargreaves | 99pts |
| 2 | Kathy Wright | 139pts | 7 | Sean Slevin | 99pts |
| 3 | Barry Harrington | 136pts | 9 | Pengfei Tian | 91pts |
| 4 | Lee Jeffries | 112pts | 10 | Peter Holloway | 90pts |
| 5 | Adrian Hall | 107pts | 10 | David Leatherdale | 90pts |
| 6 | Patrick Dodds | 103pts | | | |





4 Jean MacDonald Shropshire **40pts**
Canon EOS 20D, 70-300mm, 1/800sec at f/5.6, ISO 800
Swans on the River Trent **Judges say** A beautiful, tranquil shot, aided by the mist and Jean's cool blue colour cast

5 Alistair Ker Fife **38pts**
Nikon D200, 105mm, 1/90sec at f/9, ISO 160
Condensation on glass **Judges say** Alistair has captured fantastic patterns and contrast, creating a nice abstract

6 Garry Hadfield Lancashire **38pts**
Fujifilm FinePix S2 Pro, 28-70mm, 1/90sec at f/4.8, ISO 100
'Dreaming of bigger things' **Judges say** A fun and colourful image that is also technically excellent. Very creative

7 Gill Brears West Yorkshire **38pts**
Nikon D200, 1/160sec at f/7.1, ISO 200
Lemon dropped into water **Judges say** Gill skilfully removed the vase in Photoshop to create a more surreal image against her black background

8 Barry Harrington Essex **37pts**
Canon EOS 40D, 28-135mm, 1/500sec at f/8
Sea defences at Happisburgh, Norfolk **Judges say** Stunning action shot that has been taken at the precise moment

9 Lee Jeffries Greater Manchester **37pts**
Canon EOS 5D, 85mm, 1/500sec at f/1.2
Entwistle Reservoir, Bolton **Judges say** A mesmerising shot with incredible contrast. Nice use of black & white

10 David Leatherdale Lincolnshire **37pts**
Canon EOS 5D, 24-105mm, 1/6400sec at f/5.6, ISO 200
Waterfall from below **Judges say** By shooting from below, David was able use the light shining through the water and give his image a glow and extra depth

11 Fred Wilkinson Durham **36pts**
Konica Minolta Dynax 5D, 18-200mm, 1/25sec at f/10
Frozen bathtub in the Durham Dales **Judges say** We love the depth of field and how the grey midtones emphasise the coldness of the scene

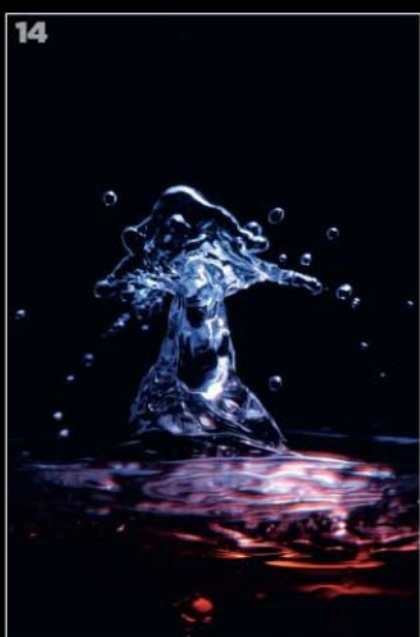
12 Paul Cunningham Glasgow **36pts**
Sony Alpha 700, 17-50mm, 1/80sec at f/4, ISO 1600
'Rain on steel' **Judges say** Excellent light and symmetry. Paul did very well to shoot this handheld and keep it noise-free at such a high ISO

13 Paul Whiting Hampshire **36pts**
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 100mm, 1/2s at f/8
'Water drops on petal of Senetti flower' **Judges say** Paul's superb composition is minimal, yet striking. We love the colour and light

14 Radka Cooper Berkshire **36pts**
Nikon D300, 105mm macro, f/8
'Water sculpture' **Judges say** With a red filter partially covering the lens and a black card resting on the rim of a bowl of water, Radka lit a single off-camera flash behind the card

15 Brian Goldie Isle of Man **35pts**
Canon EOS 40D, 1/2000sec at f/16, ISO 100
Rubber duck **Judges say** Perfect lighting and colour. Brian has used his creativity to capture a striking image

16 Adrian Hall Surrey **34pts**
Canon EOS 400D, 10-22mm, f/11
'Cornish winter sunset' **Judges say** Adrian did well to get down low and maximise the tide in the foreground, basing his composition around the rocks that lead us into the horizon





17 Dave Fletcher Tyne & Wear **34pts**

Canon EOS 40D, 150mm macro, 1/200sec at f/11, ISO 100
Water drop falling into vase **Judges say** Dave did well to choose a colourful background, and his exposure is perfect

18 Kathy Wright Norfolk **34pts**

Canon EOS 40D, 100mm macro, 1/160sec at f/5.6, ISO 200
Frozen puddle **Judges say** This is a well-seen image with lots of nice patterns and texture

19 Mani Puthuran N Humberside **34pts**

Canon EOS 20D, 70-200mm
'Seagull and Niagara Falls' **Judges say** Beautiful light and a very pleasing composition

20 Roger Dewsbery Suffolk **34pts**

Canon EOS 1v, 17-40mm, 1/8sec at f/11, Fujichrome Velvia 50
Sea defences at Happisburgh, Norfolk **Judges say** Roger has captured stunning colour and drama in one image

21 Mark Naden Hertfordshire **33pts**

Nikon D80, 60mm, 1/200sec at f/11, ISO 200
Water drop **Judges say** Mark showed great skill using this water drop falling onto the surface of a pan of water, which he backlit with flash bounced off a white card

22 Martyn Ferry Oxfordshire **33pts**

Canon Digital IXUS 400, 1/500sec at f/2.8
Spider's web **Judges say** Lovely light and symmetry. Martyn shows that you don't always need a DSLR to make a winning image

23 Stephen Hadfield Manchester **33pts**

Canon EOS 400D, 70-300mm, 1/250sec at f/7.1, ISO 200
Prestatyn beach **Judges say** This is a beautiful scene illustrating 'man meets nature'. We love the vignetting

24 Ann Stevens Kent **32pts**

Canon EOS 40D, 12-24mm, 0.6sec at f/22
Deal Beach, Kent **Judges say** Ann's cool colours, along with the minimalism of the scene, elicit a feeling of tranquility

25 Colin Sloanes Swansea **32pts**

Canon EOS 10D, 100mm macro, 1/8sec at f/16
'River of Tears' **Judges say** Colin's macro shot works well in black & white, isolating our attention on the veins of the leaves and symmetry of the water drops

26 Dan Deakin Derbyshire **32pts**

Nikon D200, 20mm, 1/30sec at f/1.8, ISO 200
'The morning after the night before' **Judges say** Dan has found a great perspective and wonderful depth of field

27 Jonathan Horrocks Surrey **32pts**

Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, 24-105mm, 0.8sec at f/20
Constantine Bay, Cornwall **Judges say** We love the strong sense of motion and the rich tones Jonathan has captured

28 Phil Hargreaves Lancashire **32pts**

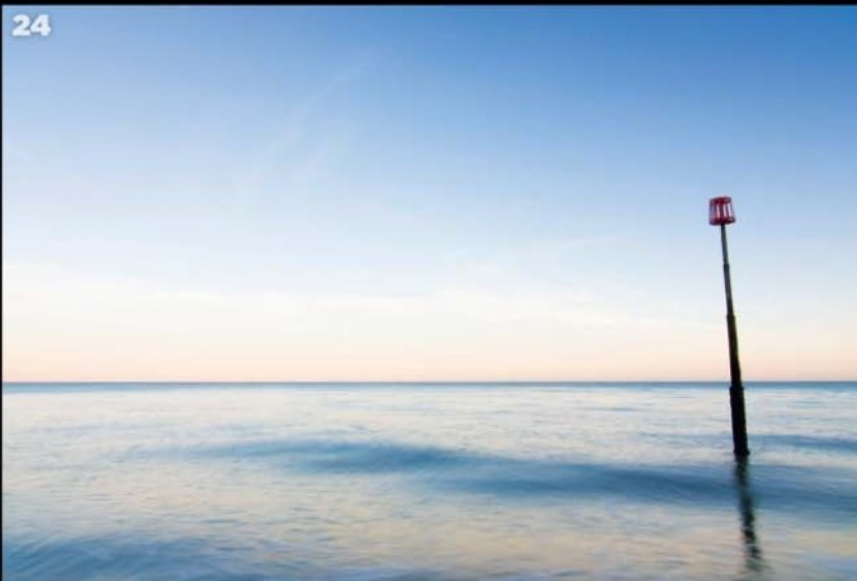
Canon EOS 20D, 10-20mm, 1sec at f/22, ISO 100
Scalebar Force, Yorkshire Dales **Judges say** Phil has captured an amazing amount of depth and a striking leading line with his framing of the stream

29 John Steven Ball Tyne & Wear **31pts**

Nikon D700, 70-210mm, 1/30sec
'Crash' **Judges say** We love the vantage point and the late afternoon light

30 Nic Kirschner Vancouver, Canada **31pts**

Nikon D200, 17-50mm, 1/3000 at f/2.8, ISO 640
Lake at twilight **Judges say** Nic's atmospheric image has both beautiful colours and a mysterious silhouette





Expert advice, help and tips from AP Editor Damien Demolder

Appraisal

How to submit your pictures

Send up to six prints, slides or images on CD (please include the original files from the camera along with your submitted versions on your CD). Tell us a little about the pictures and, if you can, include details of equipment used and exposure settings.

Send your photographs to 'Appraisal' at our usual address (see page 3). Please enclose an SAE if you would like them returned.

Snake charmer Roy Mathers

Canon EOS 40D, 70mm,
1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 200

When you go abroad it's easy to take the pictures of things that you expect to see, and you can often come back with lots of glossy, clichéd images that show nothing new or unique about the country you've visited. Coming back from India with a picture of a snake charmer, as Roy has done, puts you in that position, and the only way to recover is to photograph it extremely well. Roy has done just that.

He has used a moderately wide aperture of f/5.6 with a 70mm focal length, which, on his Canon EOS 40D, gives the effect of a 105mm lens. This is enough to give him a nice soft background so that his subject stands out. Another element that makes the picture work so well is the little pop of fill-in flash that Roy has used to even out the shadows on the snake charmer's face, and which puts little catchlights in the subject's eyes. The flash has filled in all the shadows nicely, and as it isn't the first thing you notice about the picture when you see it, it means it has not been overdone. In fact, it is only noticeable when you look closely – the only evidence of its use is the backlighting

Original



on the man's clothing.

My only criticism is that Roy has obviously shot his image in 3:2 format on his camera, and he's cropped something out of the bottom of the picture. I don't know what it was, and perhaps it was distracting, but by chopping it off Roy has ended up with a format that doesn't really look like anything – it just looks obviously like it's been cropped down. So, I've given it a nice new crop just to remove the space from the edges of the frame and above the man's head.

I've cropped to 4:3 ratio, which is the same proportion as Four Thirds. It's not square, though it is close, and it's a better set of proportions for portraiture than you get with the 3:2 ration of 35mm film or the APS-C format, which is quite long. Roy shot it with the man looking to his left, and with a bit of space for him to look into, so I've kept the same composition, but moved in a bit closer. It's a great subject, well seen and really well photographed, and that is why it is my picture of the week.



Edited

Night-time construction Duncan Nash

Sony Alpha 100, 50mm,
f/4, ISO 400

What a fantastic thing it is to work somewhere that is photographically interesting and where you are able to take advantage of your position in the company to get access to areas and buildings that that the public cannot visit. Duncan works in construction, and he has sent in a collection of images that are really interesting, showing proper boys'

toys: big diggers, lumps of steel and concrete being poured from cement mixers – it's all very exciting.

I can see from his pictures that Duncan has a good creative mind. This one really caught my eye, and Duncan has used that cross-over light time to take a picture of people working after sunset. He has got a wonderfully dramatic sky with a nice sweeping black band of clouds; then in the middle of it all there is this floodlit acropolis-like structure going up.

However, the problem Duncan has faced here relates to exposure, and the need to balance the difference in brightness between the sunset-filled sky and the floodlit cranes

and people. Looking at the image, I think Duncan has probably left it just a little bit too late to take his image, as the sky is perhaps a tiny bit too dark, and the cranes are burnt out by the floodlights. He has had to use quite a long shutter speed to get the exposure right for the sky, but in doing so he has recorded too much light from the steel structure, and consequently it is burnt out and is lacking in detail. This is a shame, as probably only ten minutes earlier he could have got a better balance. The trick is to measure the exposure from the cranes, and measure the exposure from the sky, and then wait as the sun goes down beyond the horizon

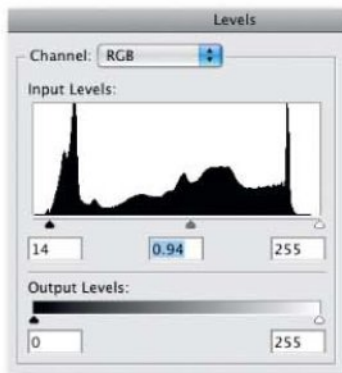
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My friend Albert Tim Allen

Canon EOS 30D, 50mm,
1/800sec at f/2.2, ISO 320



I love a portrait, especially when it's black & white and taken on a medium telephoto lens shot with a wide aperture – so Tim's in my good books.

He's taken a picture of his friend Albert, using a 50mm f/1.8 lens on his Canon EOS 30D. The APS-C sensor in Tim's camera takes the effective focal length to about 75mm, and his



chosen aperture of f/2.2, which is very wide, gives him a very shallow depth of field. The effect of this is brilliant in portraiture.

Tim has combined an interesting subject with a good lens and a sensible aperture to produce a really compelling picture. Unfortunately, it's just lacking a bit of contrast and is

rather light overall, as if there is some sort of white layer over it. Though Tim has done a good job of holding back the highlights, when you look at the histogram it shows the image has neither a proper black tone, nor a proper white one. All the tones are bunched slightly at the lighter end of the graph. That's not necessarily a bad

Tim has combined an interesting subject with a good lens and a sensible aperture to produce a compelling picture. Unfortunately it lacks contrast

thing for portraiture, but in this case there's just not enough dark tones to make Albert's suit look dark or to give us any modelling in his face, which is left looking a bit flat tonally, and lacking in three dimensions.

It is simple to correct this problem, however. Using the Levels tool I've moved the sliders in to produce a black and I've also darkened the midtones just a little bit. Then, in Curves, I've pulled down some of the darker tones to make them dark, but while holding the highlight detail. This has given a bit more contrast in the midtones and shadow areas and has made Albert stand out from the background a bit more.

Another issue is that I can tell straight away that the picture is not 100% sharp. This would not necessarily be a problem, but for the fact that Tim has allowed the camera to focus on the closest point in the picture, which is Albert's nose. To get maximum impact from your portrait shot, it's very important to focus on the subject's eyes. Finally, I've cropped the image a little to remove the unnecessary space above Albert's head, and to shift his eyes away from the centre of the frame. However, all I've done is fiddle with what Tim has produced. He's done all the work and it's a great shot.

until the two readings match.

At the time Duncan took this picture the only real option would have been to create a darker image that would have preserved the highlights, though it would probably have made the sky too dark. In almost every area of photography it's more of a sin to have blown highlights than to lose detail in the shadows, so like slide film, you should expose for the highlights and let the shadows take care of themselves. It's a great effort, and I think Duncan should definitely continue with his project, as he has some eye-catching images. It's just a question of getting the technique absolutely right.



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|-----------|--------------------------|-----|
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All our tests are conducted by people who understand the product area, as well as photography. We aim to discover any shortcomings, as well as finding those aspects that deserve praise. All our tests are thorough, honest and independent

Welcome to our test, reviews and advice section. Over the next few pages we will present this week's equipment tests, reader questions and technique pointers

Orkio Arch SLR bag £49.99

ORKIO is the latest manufacturer to break away from the traditional khaki or black-coloured camera bags. The Arch SLR bag is available in blue and red (pictured) or black and grey colours, and looks more like a satchel or laptop bag. This potentially makes it a more secure option than a traditional bag, as it doesn't advertise the fact you are carrying expensive photographic equipment.

The main compartment is around 14cm deep and 22cm high so it can easily accommodate an enthusiast-level camera and a fairly large lens. In fact, I was able to fit a Nikon D3 with Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8 lens attached. Using the included dividers, it is possible to fit two other lenses the same size as the aforementioned Nikkor on either side of the camera with room left for a flashgun. However, I would prefer an extra Velcro divider or two to be included to help further compartmentalise the area for those with smaller lenses.

A Velcro cover folds over the top of the camera compartment, which helps to protect the contents from rain and dust, while smaller pockets on the front of the bag can be used for items such as filters, memory cards, batteries and other accessories.

This is a deceptively big bag that will prove useful should you take it on your travels this summer. **Richard Sibley**

● For more information call Swains on 0845 450 4242



Micro verdict

A good value-for-money, deceptively big shoulder bag

Op/tech USA SLR wrist strap £11.99

OP/TECH USA's neoprene SLR wrist strap is designed as an alternative to a traditional neck strap. Op/tech claims that the strap's Uni-Loop system enables it to fit most SLRs and binoculars. However, I found the wrist strap's thick cord was a little awkward to attach to the strap lugs of a Canon EOS 5D.

Once attached, the strap can be fitted securely to your wrist using its sliding band. As it is made of neoprene, the strap doesn't rub or cut into your wrist, even if it is worn over a long period of time. A quick-release lock allows you to remove the strap easily when needed, such as when attaching the camera to a tripod.

Securing your camera in hand is a good option in tourist areas that are prone to pickpockets, so if you are on a city break this summer the Op/tech wrist strap may be you. **Tom Stone**



Micro verdict

The SLR wrist strap is comfortable and a great alternative to a neck strap

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Nikkor AF-S DX 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G ED vs Tamron SP AF10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 Di II LD Asph (IF)

Ultra-wideangle zooms

THESE two wideangle zoom lenses, from Nikon and Tamron, have been designed with digital APS-C-format cameras in mind. Taking into account the roughly 1.5x focal length magnification factor for the 135 format on 35mm film, this gives a viewing angle equivalent to that of 15-36mm optics. Towards the shorter end of the focal length, this qualifies these lenses as 'super' or 'ultra' wide lenses. In terms of APS-C-format, 10mm is currently the shortest angle available in a zoom lens.

The street price of the Nikkor lens price is more than twice that of its competitor, lending interest to

the comparison. The zoom factor on these lenses, at 2.4x, is low, but entirely necessary if a high standard of correction is to be achieved, at least to compete with monofocal lenses in less critical applications. The two main design problems in ultra-wideangle designs are curvilinear distortion and vignetting.

The second of these two problems is made more difficult by the special needs of digital cameras, in which the image-forming light rays need to fall perpendicularly on to the microlenses on front of the sensor's photosites. Naturally, the wider the viewing angle of the lens, the more

Geoffrey Crawley compares two extreme wideangle zoom lenses, from Nikon and Tamron, both of which are designed for APS-C-format cameras

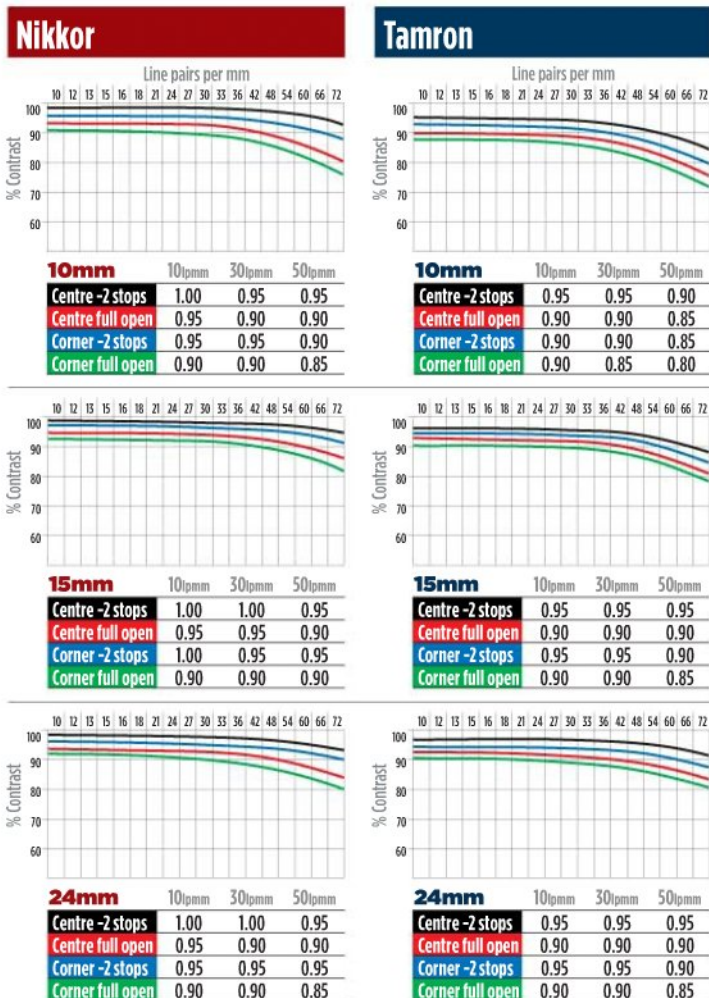
oblique are the rays falling toward the edges and margins of the frame. This problem did not occur with film because, obviously, it has no intervening microlenses. Steps must therefore be taken when designing lenses for digital cameras in order to force the rays to emerge more parallel, and to fall on the frame margins nearer to true vertical. This type of configuration is known as a telecentric design.

Obtaining minimal distortion – where straight lines in the image curve – becomes more difficult as the viewing angle increases. A reasonable standard in ultra-wideangle zoom lenses has been made possible by the use of aspheric surfaced elements. This is why the manner in which two leading optical firms deal with these problems is of interest.



Sharpness/definition

Both lenses do very well here, but they are clearly sharper at the centres of the imaging frame than toward the edges, with an obvious improvement on stopping down. The Nikkor lens gives more consistent sharpness across the frame than the Tamron optic at 10mm, but at their respective 24mm settings, performance from both lenses is very good, and it is hard to separate the two



Nikkor 10mm



Nikkor 24mm

Nikkor

AF-S DX 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G ED

THE Nikkor lens comes in its standard livery: black with a faint speckle; functional markings in white, though not highly contrasting; and specification ID picked out in gold. It is not bulky, but at 450g it is heavy for its size. Its shortest length, when the focal length is set to 15mm, measures 88mm from the camera body flange. At 24mm, the lens's longest focal length, the extension is only 5mm greater. Barrel diameter is 73mm with the front rim adding an extra 10mm, giving a 77mm screw-in filter size. This size fitting seems to be almost a standard for zoom lenses of a range of focal lengths, which is convenient, as filters of this diameter can be expensive. The attachment rim doesn't rotate during focusing, so a petal-type lens hood and special-effects filters can be used.

The main barrel feature is the very broad, 33mm zoom control ring. This, together with the coarse rubber grip, provides a secure hold. Focal lengths are indexed at 10, 12, 15, 18, 20 and 24mm, although Nikon states these are rough guides only. The smooth zooming movement, and high turn inertia rules out creep when the lens is carried vertically. Behind the zoom control ring is the manual-focusing ring, also in rubber and with a finer ridging. The 70° turn angle between infinity and closest focus is short, to the advantage of autofocus speed and battery life. As is now usual with zoom lenses, the same closest focus applies across the focal length range. In AF mode, Nikon's ultra-sonic Silent Wave Motor (SWM) drives the focus.

The manual-focusing ring does

not rotate during autofocus, and the distance scale is shown under a protective window behind the ring. When focusing manually the extensive depth of field, especially towards the shorter end of the focal length span, makes it difficult to judge sharp focus with any lens of this type. A magnified Live View is a major aid, but there may not always be time to use it. It is then that manual hyperfocal distance settings are an advantage. In common with modern Nikkors, manual override of the autofocus setting is available when the lens's mode switch is set to M/A.

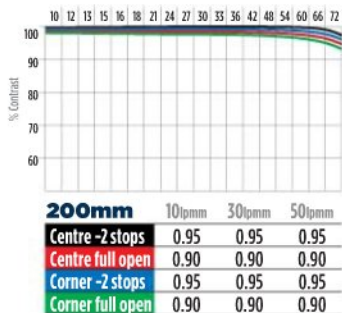
Optically

The optical construction uses 14 elements in nine groups. Of these, three have aspheric surfaces and two are in extra (low colour) dispersion (ED) glass. Nikon pioneered the use of this type of optical medium. To overcome the high cost and fragility of fluorite, Nikon launched tele optics using the newly researched ED glass. The glass, along with its higher order derivations – super, or ultra, and anomalous dispersion glasses – is now essential for the design of zoom lenses that are in any way capable of near-monofocal performance. The schematic shows a deeply curved aspheric front element, which serves as the wideangle light-ray collector. It is backed by a planoconcave and a convex/concave element, which form the focusing group. The third aspheric is at the rear, the field element distributing the rays in the image plane. The ED glass components are also at the rear, implying that colour

Understanding the graphs

The graphs shown here demonstrate the ability of the lenses on test to resolve detail. As the lines move to the right along the horizontal axis, the detail the lens is asked to record becomes finer, thus the lens becomes less successful at recording it accurately.

Each sloping line on the graph represents measurements taken from a particular area of the image – the centre and the corner – with both measurements being made for images taken using the widest aperture as well as with the aperture closed by two stops. The grid places a numerical value on the success of the lens in recording these details



at three line-pair-per-millimetre points: 10lp/mm, 30lp/mm and 50lp/mm. The graph on the left demonstrates what we would expect from a near perfect lens. As the lines are all very close together, the performance of the lens is almost as good at the edge of the

frame as it is in the middle – where lenses are at their best. The lines stay close to the top of the graph, as the lens is able to clearly resolve very fine detail. All lenses have a limit to what they can resolve, and this is shown where the lines of the graph begin to slope downwards. In this example the lens only starts to struggle at the 72lp/mm point.



Tamron 10mm



Tamron 24mm

Curvilinear distortion has to be tolerated in an ultra-wideangle lens, and is noticeable at 10mm

corrections are mainly applied at this stage of the light path. Comparing this schematic with that of the 10–24mm Tamron lens shows an obvious general similarity. As shown in recent lens comparison reviews, the front groups share a close identity, and aspheric and low dispersion glasses are similarly placed as in current designs.

Performance

The immediate impression given by this lens on bringing up resolution/contrast profiles on screen is of outstanding sharpness and detail definition. It is there centrally at full aperture ($f/3.5$) and 10mm focal length, where the biggest demands are made on image quality. There is the expected fall off towards the edges and corners, but not to an unsatisfactory level. It is an 'expected' fall off because, until recently, the 135 full-frame equivalent of a 15mm focal length would have had a much smaller aperture. Stopping down brings in the frame margins to optimise at $f/6.3$. This pattern of performance continues across the zoom span. Autofocus is very rapid at 432 milliseconds from infinity to closest focus, aided by the SWM drive, which also contributes to

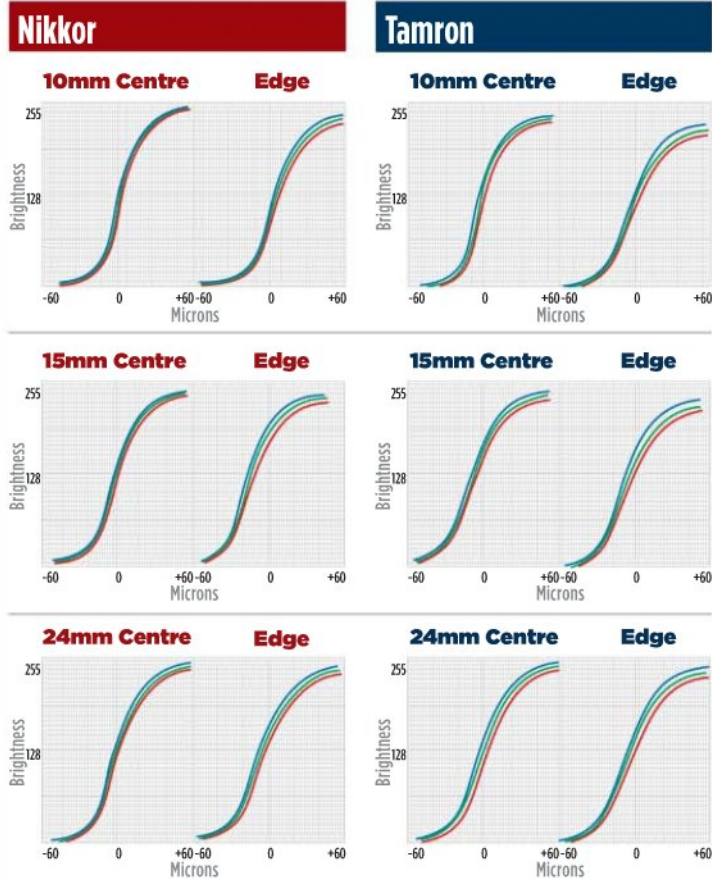
its quiet operation – 27dB over 35dB background.

The two big sins of ultra-wideangle lenses – and zooms in particular – are vignetting and distortion. The former is obvious with the Nikkor optic at full aperture and 10mm – around 2/3EV – and shows up markedly with any underexposure. By two stops down, at $f/7.1$, it is negligible. At full aperture and 15mm, vignetting is about 1/3EV, and disappears at two stops down. At 24mm, the usual zoom lens's aim of keeping down size and weight at the longer focal length end in the optical cell and mount, leads to an increase to 1/2EV wide open, rapidly going when stopping down.

Curvilinear distortion has to be tolerated in an ultra-wideangle lens, and it is quite noticeable at 10mm. As with vignetting, the best results are at 15mm, where there is a changeover point in the zoom mechanism. The figures at this focal length are of monofocal lens quality and will satisfy critical standards. The rise of cushioning towards 24mm remains quite reasonably low. Overall, drawing is of a higher-than-expected standard for a zoom span of this order. The excellent definition at full aperture and 10mm requires a high standard of colour correction, which indeed proves to be so. It deteriorates somewhat towards the frame margins, though it improves by 15mm and virtually reaches the central standard by 24mm. Considering how well the special problems of ultra-wideangle zoom lens designs have been dealt with, the 10–24mm Nikkor is clearly a modern, state-of-the-art design.

Chromatic aberration

Both lenses have done very well in our chromatic aberration test, although the Nikkor optic shows slightly better performance at its wide and tele extents than the Tamron lens, especially in the centre of the image area. The Tamron lens's centre-edge performance is very consistent

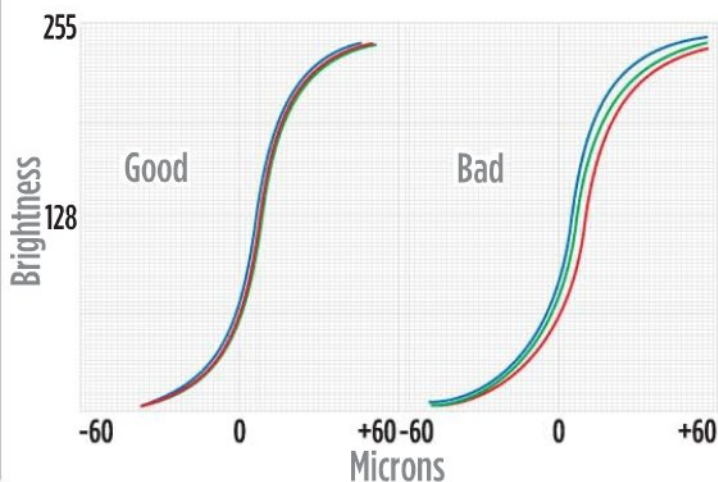


Understanding the graphs

Lateral chromatic aberration induces colour fringing and loss of sharpness, so edges are rimmed with colour and are soft. These graphs show the degree of error when the ISO 12,233 slanted knife-edge test is performed at the key focal length settings. Measurements are taken from the centre of the image and from the edge, where lens performance dips.

The greater the divergence of the red, green and blue lines, the greater the error and the more likely the lens is to exhibit the effects of chromatic aberration.

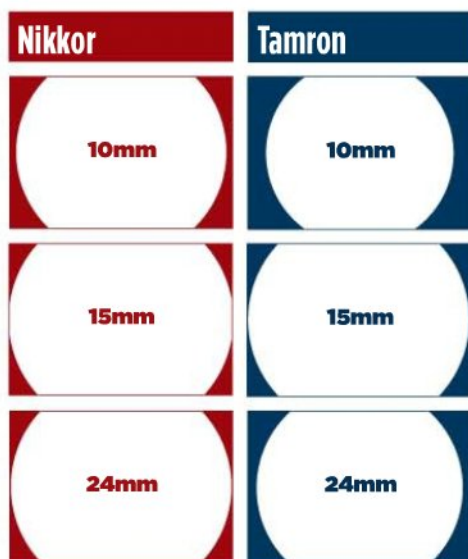
Some divergence in the lines is to be expected, especially at the shorter focal length settings of zoom lenses and at the edge of the image frame. It is the overall appearance that is important rather than the detail of the curves. The graphs below show typical good and bad results.



Vignetting

Vignetting figures around $\frac{2}{3}$ EV at full aperture mean fall off is visible in images captured using the APS-C-sized sensors these lenses are designed to cover

These diagrams indicate the vignetting characteristics of each lens at full aperture. They show the degree of difference in the illumination between the centre of the image frame and the corners of the frame. Measured in EV, figures larger than $\frac{1}{3}$ EV will be clearly visible. Deviations of $\frac{1}{6}$ EV and below will not show. The darkest areas indicate shading of about $\frac{1}{3}$ EV and the lighter areas $\frac{1}{6}$ EV, but in reality the effect is graduated.



| | Nikkor | | | | Tamron | | |
|-------|--------|------|------|-------|--------|------|------|
| | 10mm | 15mm | 24mm | | 10mm | 15mm | 24mm |
| f/3.5 | 2/3 | 1/3 | 1/2 | f/3.5 | >2/3 | >1/3 | >1/2 |
| f/5 | 1/3 | <1/3 | 1/3 | f/5 | 1/2 | 1/3 | >1/3 |
| f/7.1 | >1/6 | 1/6 | 1/6 | f/7.1 | 1/3 | <1/3 | <1/3 |

Vignetting is apparent at full aperture at all zoom settings, but is well controlled considering the focal length span. It is most severe at f/3.5 at 10mm

The Tamron lens shows more vignetting at its wide and tele settings, but the difference is small. Stopped down, vignetting is not a problem

Curvilinear distortion

These figures illustrate the degree of 'bend' in a straight line that was recorded 4mm from the top edge of the frame, with '-' indicating barrel distortion and '+' indicating pincushion distortion.

| | Nikkor | | | | Tamron | | |
|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| | 10mm | 15mm | 24mm | | 10mm | 15mm | 24mm |
| 7.5m | -0.93% | +0.18% | +0.56% | -0.72% | -0.68% | -0.70% | |
| 25m | -0.87% | +0.12% | +0.25% | -0.68% | -0.62% | -0.74% | |
| ∞ | -0.87% | +0.12% | +0.25% | -0.68% | -0.62% | -0.74% | |

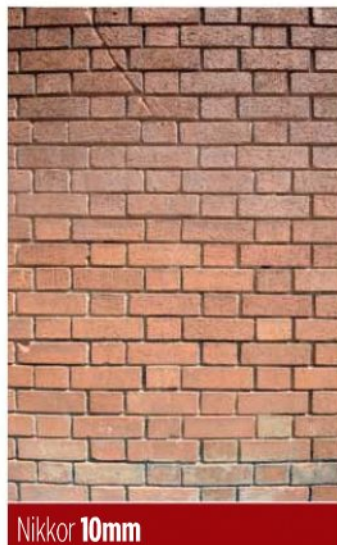
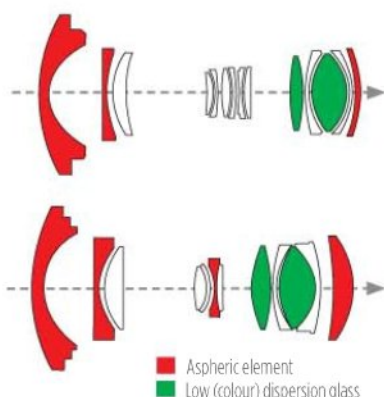
Distortion is well-controlled, but barrel distortion is noticeable at 10mm at close-focusing distances

The Tamron lens shows less barrel distortion than the Nikkor optic, and no pincushion distortion at any point

Lens construction

Nikkor Construction is of 14 elements in nine groups, of which three have aspheric surfaces, and two are Extra Low Dispersion (ED) glass. The similarities in design with the Tamron lens are obvious

Tamron Like the Nikkor optic, the front group of the Tamron lens is of the double-Gauss type, but there are 12 elements in nine groups, two fewer than are incorporated in the Nikkor lens



Nikkor 10mm



Nikkor 24mm

Slight barrel distortion at 10mm gives way to slight pincushioning at 24mm, but in normal use the effect is subtle and will not impact upon images

Tamron

SP AF10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 Di II LD Asph (IF)

DIGNIFIED by the 'SP' 'special product' tag, this zoom lens has a quality finish in universal matt black, with the lens specification ID on a deep gold band between the focus and zoom controls. Like the 10-24mm Nikkor optic, the Tamron lens's shortest length is at 15mm, where it measures 85mm, fractionally less than its competitor. At 24mm in focal length, it is the same: 93mm. Overall diameter at 73mm is also the same, as is that of the front lens hood and filter attachment rim: 83mm. The screw-in filter fitting is the 'ubiquitous' 77mm. However, despite similar dimensions, at 415g, the Tamron lens is noticeably lighter.

The manual-focusing ring is located up front with the white feet and metre scales marked ahead of the coarse, ridged, wide rubber grip. The turn resistance is low but precise, with an 80° rotation between infinity and closest focus at 24cm. Focusing is by internal group movement, though the manual ring rotates when autofocusing. The front filter attachment rim of the lens does not turn, however. My remarks when discussing the Nikkor lens, relating to the problems of precise focusing whether on auto or manual, apply here too. The great depth of field, especially towards the shorter focal length end, can cover many errors.

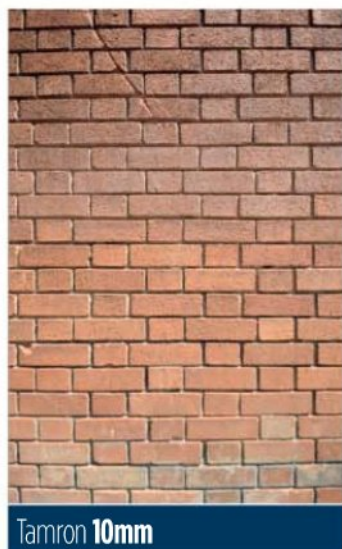
Manual override of the AF lock setting is not possible, but as the clutch is mechanical a flick of the lens's AF/M toggle switches it over, whatever the body focus mode. The zoom control ring is broad and finely

ridged; it turns easily and smoothly and doesn't creep. It is indexed at 10, 13, 15, 18, 20 and 24mm, to provide a rough guide to its focal length setting. Like the Nikkor zoom lens, the front extension is slightly forward at 10mm focal length. It then retracts at 15mm before extending again to 24mm, indicating complex group movements. Build quality is high, and handling easy. It is available in Canon, Nikon and Sony mounts, with a Pentax mount expected.

Optically

The similarity in construction between the Tamron and Nikkor lenses can be seen in the schematics. The front groups of both lenses are of the double-Gauss type, but the Tamron optic has 12 elements in nine groups, compared to the Nikkor lens's 14 elements in nine groups. The difference lies in the groups behind the aperture diaphragm, where Tamron has been able to reduce the number of elements from six to four by incorporating an aspheric element to give a total of four aspherics. The other three are similarly placed to those in the Nikkor lens, as are the two elements in low dispersion glass.

Clearly, lenses of such short focal length have to be strongly retrofocus – that is, reverse telephoto. One with a back focus close to its 10mm focal length would be located well back behind the camera body flange. The need to give clearance for the flipping mirror compounds the design problems. The retrofocus factor of the Tamron and Nikkor zooms is over



Tamron 10mm



Tamron 24mm

The Tamron lens shows no pincushion distortion, but slight barrel distortion is visible across the focal length span, at its worst at close-focusing distances

Central performance at the 10mm end of the span shows a high standard of resolution and detail

6x. That means the entrance pupil has six times the diameter of the exit pupil, a very high figure. Piping the rays from across the wide viewing angle down the long barrel and stand-off of the image plane brings in vignetting. Hence the emphasis on dealing with this factor in wideangle and ultra-wideangle designs. Although there may be visual similarities in the configuration of these two lenses, major differences are present in the details and pattern of group movement when zooming.

Performance

As with the Nikkor lens, central performance at the wideangle, 10mm, end of the Tamron optic's span shows a high standard of resolution and definition, but of a different character. The almost aggressive high-contrast sharpness is replaced by a somewhat lower contrast, but are equal in resolution. This coincides with the overall impression that, tonally and in colour, the Tamron designers have opted for a more 'pictorial' quality. The fall off towards the frame margins

at full aperture is less noticeable, especially at 15–24mm focal length. For subjects where more aggressive sharpness may be desirable – as in technical work – it is arguable that judicious post-capture editing can enhance it. This is better than 'softening' a higher contrast rendering. At 690 milliseconds, autofocus is somewhat slow from infinity to closest focus, and at 37dB over 35dB background is also quite conspicuous.

As for distortion and vignetting, there are few surprises. At 10mm, the most difficult length to correct, the barrel figure at infinity was reasonable, improving with closer focus. Generally, there was an evenness over the zoom span, indicating a desire to maintain field-drawing characteristics across it, rather than optimise in one focal length region.

In terms of vignetting, the apparent design aim of evening up image quality across the zoom range of the Tamron lens has led to marginally higher figures overall than with the Nikkor optic. The finely graded tonality with good definition at full aperture makes the excellent lateral colour aberration found centrally on test at 10mm no surprise. This is maintained across the span to 24mm. Towards the frame edges, the correction falls off as expected, but colour fringing does not show up, with neutrality maintained as the highest resolution detail merges into even tone.

This zoom lens displays the Tamron design philosophy of leaning more to a less vivid and more pictorial image quality. In brief, it's a classic design. **AP**

Data file

| | Nikon | Tamron |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| | Nikon UK, 380 Richmond Road, Kingston, Surrey KT2 5PR, Tel: 0871 200 964 Website: www.nikon.co.uk | Intro 2020, Priors Way, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 2HP. Tel: 01628 674 411. Web: www.intro2020.co.uk |
| RRP | £799.99 | £499.99 |
| Lens mount | Nikon F (DX) | Canon, Nikon (APS-C only) |
| Max aperture | f/3.5-4.5 | f/3.5-4.5 |
| Angle of view | 109° – 61° (APS-C equivalent) | 108° 44' – 60° 20' (APS-C equivalent) |
| Near focus | 0.24m | 0.24m |
| Diaphragm blades | Seven | Seven |
| Filter size | 77mm | 77mm |
| Weight | 460g | 406g |
| Measured focal length | 10.6-24.2mm | 10.8-24.1mm |
| Dimensions | 82.5 x 87mm | 86.5x83.2mm |

Our verdict

LENS tests rarely have the special interest of comparing two optics of a quite identical specification, as with these two 10–24mm f/3.5–6.3 zoom lenses. Taking the technical point of view, the Nikkor lens is the 'better' of the two. As its street price is over double that of the Tamron optic, this is hardly surprising. Yet, technical excellence never gives the complete picture, however satisfying it may be to academic purists. The Tamron optic's balance of image qualities offers a fully satisfactory solution to the problems of ultra-wideangle zoom lens design. These are only increased by the special needs of imaging on the photo-sensor of a digital camera. The Nikkor has the advantage of the ultra-sonic Silent Wave Motor AF drive, which, along with its more complex optical construction, will have contributed to its higher price.

The lens test in AP 27 June issue, dealing with Canon and Tamron super-zoom lenses made the point that, in the age of computer-aided optical design, the differences between brands and models were often in philosophy only. Tamron has consistently gone for pictorial, less aggressive image quality. Nikon, with its core of hard-nosed pro users, majors on basic optical properties. The higher contrast detail does assist autofocus lock. With its own model, Tamron has been able to offer significant competition in performance and, notably, in cost. The really confirmed Nikon devotee will probably prefer to keep to the home brand. Others – including those owning DSLRs other than Nikon – should find the Tamron lens a very practical proposition. Interestingly, Tamron has now announced the addition to its range of a 10–20mm zoom lens.

Nikkor AF-S DX 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G ED

| | | |
|---------------|----------|-------|
| Specification | ●●●●●●●● | 25/30 |
| Build | ●●●●●●●● | 18/20 |
| Handling | ●●●●●●●● | 18/20 |
| Performance | ●●●●●●●● | 28/30 |

89%

Tamron SP AF10-24mm f/3.5-4.5 Di II LD Asph (IF)

| | | |
|---------------|----------|-------|
| Specification | ●●●●●●●● | 25/30 |
| Build | ●●●●●●●● | 17/20 |
| Handling | ●●●●●●●● | 18/20 |
| Performance | ●●●●●●●● | 27/30 |

87%

Nikon devotees will probably prefer to keep to the home brand. Others – including those owning DSLRs other than Nikon – should find the Tamron lens a very practical proposition

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Do you have a photographic question that you would like answered?

Be it about modern technology, vintage equipment, photographic science or help with technique – here at AP we have the team that can help you.

Simply send your questions to: apanswers@ipcmedia.com or by post to: AP Answers, Amateur Photographer Magazine, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

Card capacity

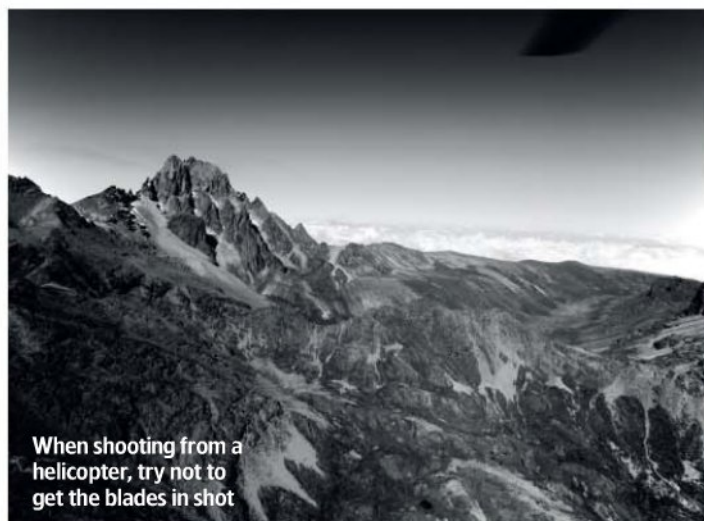
David Jacobs asks I have a 4GB SanDisk CompactFlash card that is a few years old. Recently I noticed that it only shows up as having a 2GB capacity when I load it in Windows XP. When I saw this I also realised that it was storing far fewer images than it should be on the memory card. Did I buy a faulty or counterfeit card?



Richard Sibley replies Fear not, the chances are that your card is fine. Memory cards used to be formatted with a FAT16 file structure, which doesn't allow for a memory capacity of greater than 2GB. To get around this, Microsoft created FAT32 to allow computer hard drives and other devices, including memory cards, to have a capacity of up to 2TB.

Some early memory card readers and devices were only compatible with FAT16 format cards, so SanDisk created a special design for its 4GB CompactFlash card. On the side of the card is a very small switch

that can be changed between 2GB, 2GB or 4GB. By switching to 4GB you should be able to use the entire capacity of the card, though you may need to reformat the card in your camera to be able to do this (modern DSLRs and computers will format cards as FAT32). However, if the card cannot be read by a camera or a computer when switched to 4GB, you can try switching to the 2GB position. Once the 2GB memory is full, simply switch the card to the second 2GB position and continue shooting. Effectively it is like having two 2GB cards.



When shooting from a helicopter, try not to get the blades in shot

Aerial photography

Johan Walt asks I have been treated by my family to a helicopter ride for my birthday and would like to take some photographs while in the air. What equipment and settings should I use?

Richard Sibley replies My first piece of advice would be to use as fast a shutter speed as possible, preferably faster than 1/500sec. This should help to prevent much of the motion blur and vibrations that are caused by the movement of the helicopter. A lens or camera with vibration reduction should also help keep camera shake under control, but it will not reduce motion blur caused by the movement of the helicopter.

The effects will also be exaggerated if you use a telephoto lens, so instead try using a wideangle optic to capture as much of the landscape as possible – but be careful not to get any of the helicopter in shot! If you have one available, a tilt-shift lens could be fun to use, letting you capture that 'miniature landscape' effect caused by the shallow depth of field.

You may be able to shoot with a window down in the helicopter, but take a polarising filter in case you can't. This will reduce reflections should you have to shoot through glass or plastic.

DIY overflow pipe

Dr Nigel J Fairweather asks I am looking for a gadget for my darkroom, but I do not know its name. It is a hollow standpipe around 5in (13cm) long, which fits in the plughole of a sink and keeps water at a fixed depth when washing prints. I have tried Nova Darkroom, Jessops and Mifsuds without success. Can you help?

Richard Sibley replies The device you are after is often known as an overflow standpipe. However, I also could not find any currently available in the UK, either new or second-hand, although I'm sure that with the demise of the home darkroom there must be hundreds not being used.

I would suggest you try making your own by cutting out the middle of a suitably sized plug and inserting a section of plastic tubing. You can use silicone sealant to make sure that the pipe is securely attached to the plug.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Question

The exposure compensation button is one of the most useful features on any camera, and many entry-level photographers ask us about its exact purpose. Usually marked on a camera with a +/- symbol, the exposure value compensation (or EV) button allows a photographer to adjust the

FROM THE AP FORUM

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Your questions answered



Wireless flash

cpfc12 writes I have a Sony Alpha 200 and am using a Sony HVL-58AM flashgun. To operate it wirelessly I need to raise the in-camera flash. However, as I don't want to do this all the time I would like to buy a different trigger. Do you have any advice?

Roger Provins replies You must use the pop-up flash to send infrared (IR) signals to the flashgun to use it wirelessly. If the added light from the pop-up flash is not wanted, a temporarily attached IR filter or a piece of exposed and processed 35mm film leader will block visible light while still passing IR to control the flashgun.

cpfc12 replies I have actually tried that and it does get around the problem. I just wondered if there was anything a little more professional?

RonM replies I dug out the Minolta IR wireless flash controller unit and tried it on the Sony Alpha 900 with the Minolta 5600HS(D) flash. It does not work with the Alpha 900, and neither does it work with the Alpha 200. I do hope that Sony produces its own trigger that will work with all its flashes, as the wireless flash capability of the Minolta system was a major selling point.

TallPaul replies The old Minolta controller does not work with the Alpha 900, but the recently announced Sony HVL-F20AM flash unit does have wireless control.

For an Alpha 200 and HVL-F58AM, why not just stick to using the on-board flash with the IR filter method? A more 'professional' option is to use radio triggers like the Elinchrom Skyport range or a set of PocketWizards, but you will only have manual control of the flash power, not TTL.

Selenium cells

Dave Thomas asks Could you tell me whether it is possible to buy replacement for the selenium cells fitted in 1950s and 1960s cameras, in order to provide reliable metering?

Richard Sibley replies Megatron manufactures selenium cells for lightmeters and other devices (visit www.megatron.co.uk or call 0208 365 9797). As well as producing a

series of standard-sized cells, the company can also cut special shapes and sizes to order. This can be useful if the cell for a particular camera is not of a standard size and shape. Prices range from £8.80 to £22.50, with a minimum price of £18 for a custom order.

If you do not know which selenium cell is required for your camera, then a camera repairer should be able to tell you and advise as to how much it will cost to install the new one.

camera's exposure by a set amount.

For example, setting the EV to +1 will make the exposure one stop brighter than the value the camera has metered. How it increases the exposure will depend on the shooting mode you have set the camera to. If shooting in aperture-priority mode, the camera will increase the exposure time by +1EV; if it is in shutter-priority mode, it will open the aperture by +1EV.

However, it isn't just ± 1 EV steps that can be adjusted, as most cameras can adjust the EV by as little as 0.3, or 1/3 of a stop. While it is possible to do this by setting

the camera to manual exposure mode and adjusting the values yourself, using exposure compensation can prove a far faster method.

If you find that images taken under difficult lighting conditions are under or overexposed, such as when taking a backlit portrait, the EV compensation can be changed so that the images are correctly exposed. The exposure compensation remains in place until it is returned to its default value of 0, so all images taken will have the selected compensation applied to the metering until this time. **Richard Sibley**

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BluBox image compression software

Archiving and sending digital images can clog up your hard drive. **Richard Sibley** finds out just how much space can be saved using BluBox image compression software

MORE photographers than ever are sending images to friends and family via the internet and email. However, as file sizes increase some internet connections and email providers simply cannot cope with the huge demands that sending a number of images can place on them.

BluBox software is designed to reduce the file size of images by compressing the data within them. It does this by creating a BluBox archive file of the selected images. This is very similar to the commonly used 'zip' files, which store a number of data files within one compressed file. To access the images you must 'extract' them from the BluBox archive. Thankfully, unlike other general archive compression software, the BluBox browser software allows you to see the exact images contained within the archive before extraction.

Adding to its functionality is the fact that it can be used from within Microsoft Windows. Simply right click on a folder or some files and you can choose to create a compressed BluBox archive of them, without needing to have the software already open. You can also archive images and email the archive to a recipient, from within the software itself.

Compression

Images can be compressed in two ways, the first of which is by lossless binary compression. This method looks for any identical binary coding

used within an image's data and then catalogues this information so that it takes up less space, but without destroying any of it. I found that it reduces the size of a 12-million-pixel JPEG file by around 5%.

The second option, Image Compression, is a form of lossy compression in which image data is lost rather than rearranged. However, the reduction in file size can be significant. When set to its maximum compression option, a 3.59MB JPEG file became a 188KB BluBox archive file, which takes up 20 times less space on a hard disk drive. Once the image was extracted from the BluBox archive file it became a JPEG file measuring 1.78MB on my hard drive.

When viewed side by side there is a significant difference in image quality between the two images, with the compressed image looking more pixellated and lacking detail.

So photographers wishing to archive their photographs should use the binary, or either the low or medium compression settings, to avoid images becoming unsuitable for fine printing. However, that is not to say that the maximum compression setting doesn't have its place. It is, for example, great for sending a package of images via email that are either intended for web use, as small prints or just for reference.

The person receiving the BluBox archive file must use the BluBox software to extract the images from the archive, but thankfully a



BluBox's simple browser interface allows you to quickly view and select images to place inside, or extract from, an archive

free BluBox Viewer is available for just this task.

Verdict

BluBox is a simple-to-use archiving program that allows you to compress as little or as much data as you wish. Although at its most extreme compression setting image quality is affected, at its lesser settings the images are perfectly suitable for web use and smaller prints. Perfect if you wish to email your holiday images to family and friends.

Price around £13.20. For more information or to buy visit www.blubox.com

System requirements Windows PC running Windows XP or Vista, Microsoft .NET framework version 2.0 or higher, licence registration requires a connection to the internet **Recommended** 400MHz processor, 256MB RAM, 40MB free disk space



Competition

We have **20 BOXED COPIES** of BluBox version 4 to give away. For your chance to win a copy please send your name and telephone number on a postcard to:

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The closing date for the competition is the 31 August 2009. Twenty entries will be drawn at random and the winners notified

Although at its most extreme compression setting image quality is affected, at its lesser settings the images are perfectly suitable for web use and smaller prints

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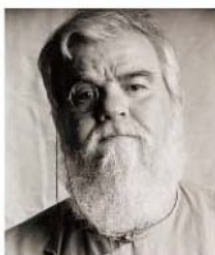
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Roger Hicks

I MAY BE A CAMERA COLLECTOR, BUT I DO NOT KEEP MY MODELS IN GLASS CASES. I ACTUALLY USE THEM



ROGER HICKS is a much-published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife, Frances Schultz. Roger started photography as a teenager in the 1960s and worked professionally in a London advertising studio in the mid-1970s. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many photography magazines, including 'Shutterbug' in America. Visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com.

FOR years, camera collectors had a bad name. According to their detractors they deprived 'real' photographers of cameras that could be used, and put them on shelves in glass cases where they slowly gummed up from disuse. Also they forced up prices: photographers, it was implied, would not pay as much as collectors.

Even 30 years ago, when I stopped collecting Leica gear, this was highly disputable. Against the first accusation, a lot of collectors did (and do) use their cameras, including even the weird accessories and some frankly rotten lenses, and it has to be said that an awful lot of non-'collectable' cameras don't get used much either.

As for the second, although many photographers are pathologically mean, there is (and always has been) a big gap between rare and unusual cameras, and 'cooking' models of the same camera. Leicas are the collectors' cameras *par excellence*, and there are so many 'cooking' examples around that it is hard to argue that collectors ever forced up prices of the everyday models.

Also, if you are primarily interested in actually taking pictures, rather than playing with old cameras, there is often something newer and better you could use. Of course, there are exceptions. Some classic cameras are wonderfully compact, such as screw-mount Leicas with collapsible lenses and folding Kodak Retinas. Even then, their prices always seemed to me to reflect their usability pretty well: if you wanted an ultra-compact camera with high-quality lenses, that was what you had to pay.

Admittedly, there are some cameras (and lenses) that are both rare and highly usable, such as the original Leica MP or the 9cm f/2.2 Thambar soft-focus lens, and in such cases it might just be true that prices were forced up by competition between users and collectors. But there are not many, and never were.

There are also plenty of cameras that were indifferent when they were new. Their only virtue as cameras, was that they were cheap. Today, we may admire them for their styling, ingenuity or quirkiness, but they are still as indifferent as ever they were. The only reasons to use them are out of curiosity, or in the unlikely event that they give a unique look that cannot be duplicated with anything better, or because they are cheap. For 'users' to accuse 'collectors' of pushing up the prices of these cameras is as ridiculous as 'collectors' accusing 'users' of pushing up the prices. Such cameras are not especially 'usable'. 'Users' are, therefore, pushing up the prices for 'collectors', in whose glass cabinets such things properly belong. Cheap, old TLRs such as my Graflex 22 or Semiflex belong firmly in this category.

Besides, today everything has changed. Most old, high-quality, usable cameras are absurdly cheap. And, though it may not look like it in the current recession, a lot of people have a lot more money than they did 50 or so years ago, when so many of today's 'classic' cameras were made. There is, therefore, less incentive to try to persuade oneself that old and relatively inexpensive

cameras are as useful as something that was more expensive when it was new. To be sure, some are: I've already cited screw-mount Leicas ('cooking' models of which are cheap next to M-mounts, and less bulky) as well as folding Retinas.

There are plenty of mid-ranking cameras, though, where there is almost no reason to use them any more if you are serious about your photography. The only real reasons to use them are that you are seriously broke, or that you don't use that style of camera with enough passion to want a better one. Oh, yes, and sentimental value. That's why I use my late father-in-law's Kowa Six. Or, for that matter, curiosity, which is why I have a Pentacon 6TL. If I were really serious about medium-format SLRs, I'd probably buy another Hasselblad. But I'm not. They're nice to have for some shots, but mostly, if I'm going to shoot medium format, I don't like SLRs.

In other words, while there are many collectors who don't use their cameras, there are also plenty of users who end up with a surprisingly large collection of cameras, because they buy them to use, because they can afford it. And even if they don't use every single camera in their collection, well, does it matter? **AP**

Some cameras and lenses are both rare and highly usable, such as the original Leica MP or the 9cm f/2.2 Thambar soft-focus lens

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